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ABSTRACT

This book, assembled by the National Coalition of Educational Equity Advocates (NCEEA), addresses broad structural issues that can serve as the foundation for rebuilding an equitable educational system that is committed to excellence for all children. It argues that local, state, and federal governments and agencies are needed to create an integrated system of support. It also calls for national, state, and local recognition that equity is inseparable from quality in the measure of educational excellence; offers a comprehensive view of systemic change beyond the current content and performance standards; and examines several of education's structural elements of an inequitable U.S. educational system. Chapters address the following areas: the characteristics of desirable schools, opportunity-to-learn standards, school finance, family empowerment, teacher development, and student assessment. Recommendations are offered regarding the role of federal, state, and local governments and agencies. Three figures, two tables, and a list of contacts for the NCEEA Support Groups are included. (Contains 128 references.) (LMI)

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Operating Officer, Opportunity Systems ◆ Hele
Curriculum Development ◆ Jonathan Kozol, Aut
of Education, University of Cincinnati ◆ David
Education, California State University-San Marcos

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EDUCATE AMERICA:

A CALL FOR EQUITY IN SCHOOL REFORM

The National Coalition of Educational Equity Advocates

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1001 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 719
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Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, Inc.
5454 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1500
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

National Educational Association
Center for Revitalization of Urban Education
1201 16th Street, N.W., 3rd floor
Washington, DC 20036

National Coalition of Educational Equity Advocates

Educate America: A Call for Equity in School Reform

Primary Authors

Sheryl Denbo	President, Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, Inc.
Carl Grant	Professor, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Shirley Jackson	Director of Comprehensive School Health Education Program, U.S. Department of Education
Byron Williams	Consultant

Contributing Authors

Maureen Gillette	Assistant Professor, The College of St. Rose
Shirley McCune	President, Learning Trends
Robert Slavin	Director, Center for Research on Effective Schools for Disadvantaged Students

Editors

Kathy Scales Bryan	Research Associate, American Association of University Women
Jennifer E. Cusack	Program Associate, American Youth Policy Forum
Margaret LaRocca	Publications Manager, Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, Inc.
Elizabeth Weiser Ramirez	Director of Advocacy, ASPIRA Association, Inc.
Lynda Tredway	Consultant, American Youth Policy Forum

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Educate America is truly a collective effort. It grew out of a deeply felt need to formulate a proactive educational agenda. In January of 1993, twenty-four organizations and individuals came together to identify the components of systemic educational reform. From that first meeting, academics, practitioners and advocates from around the country agreed to assist in writing this document. Over sixty individuals contributed their time to serve on brainstorming, writing, and editing committees. Thank you to those individuals who helped conceptualize the main ideas of this report and who read draft after draft of this document. A list of those who served on the writing and editing committees is found after the references.

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PREFACE

The National Coalition of Educational Equity Advocates seeks to assure that all children are participants and beneficiaries of the highest quality educational programming. Our concern for both quality and equity requires that we demand that all students have access to high quality educational programs that have been designed by teams of culturally diverse individuals meeting the needs of a diverse student population and society. The National Coalition of Educational Equity Advocates measures equity by resources, quality of educational programs and processes, teachers' readiness to teach, students' readiness to learn, and student results. Working under the assumption that all children can learn, the success of schools, not simply the success of students, should be measured by student results, with all groups of students reaching the highest possible achievement levels.

Responding to the growing concern about the quality and nature of public education in the United States, the National Coalition of Educational Equity Advocates (NCEEA) seeks to:

1. Influence federal, state and local educational reform legislation and programs to assure that equity concerns are reflected;
2. Work toward the alignment of all components of systemic reform at the local, state and federal levels;
3. Assist state education agencies to develop their capacities to carry out equitable reform efforts;
4. Influence educational equity advocates (including parents, community members, and individuals and organizations that are concerned with special populations) on the need for and ways to expand their emphasis to include collaboration on issues of systemic educational reform.

The NCEEA members, reflecting a range of educational equity issues, are determined that the vital goal of achieving educational equity for all is not obscured in the current debate about national education reform. Although differences of opinion and of priority can arise from our individual commitments to specific equity goals, we share a conviction that reform is only real when it is real for all.

Educate America addresses broad structural issues that, if resolved, we see as the foundation for communities and schools to rebuild education free of inequity and committed to excellence for *all* children. A full representation of the inequities faced by any individual or group is beyond *Educate America's* scope, as are detailed proposed solutions to population-specific needs (e.g., Latino, Asian/Pacific American, limited English proficient, female, Native American, students with disabilities or African American).

Educate America argues the need for local, state and federal governments and agencies to create an integrated system of supports. These supports will empower schools and communities to meet the needs of *all* who are denied educational benefits by the barriers of inequity. It also calls for national, state and local recognition that equity is inseparable from quality in the measure of educational excellence.

Educate America presents a comprehensive view of systemic change well beyond the content and performance standards presently being advocated as sufficient to achieve "world class" education for our nation. Critical components of systemic reform that are examined include a vision of the schools we want, Opportunity to Learn Standards, school finance issues, family empowerment issues, teacher preparation and staff development, and testing and assessment issues. As advocates of educational excellence for all, we offer *Educate America* to national, state, and local policy-making bodies, organizations and administrative agencies to encourage their systemic approach to educational reform. The success of reform will lie in its implementation at state and local levels; it will depend to a very large degree on the abilities of state and local educators to provide an understanding of equity in ways that translate into improved instructional programs, support services and learning opportunities for all students.

WHY — *Educate America?*

- The experts in systemic reform most involved in defining the nature of that reform are not working from an equity perspective. They relegate equity to the status of an access issue that can be addressed after excellence is achieved.
- Federal leadership has defined systemic reform essentially in terms of content and performance standards, leaving out components that are critical for reform success.
- Equity specialists have concentrated on special issues and programs (e.g., sexual harassment or "compensatory" programs for children of the poor) and have not adequately worked together to influence the mainstream of educational reform.

HOW — Is *Educate America* different?

- *Educate America* explores the reasons why, given the reality of our "new mainstream," schools cannot be significantly improved except by reforming them on the principles of equity. The very nature of our schools, their management systems, policies, programs, curriculum and instruction must be redesigned to meet the needs of all of our students.
- *Educate America* expands the narrow federal definition of systemic reform to address critical issues from an equity perspective, including:
    - The schools we want;
    - Opportunity to Learn Standards;
    - School finance;
    - Family empowerment;
    - Preparing teachers, both pre-service and in-service;
    - Student assessment and testing.
- *Educate America* discusses and demonstrates the importance of aligning federal, state and local efforts to achieve school reform.

WHAT — Is *Educate America* meant to accomplish?

- The uniting of equity organizations to influence the mainstream of education reform at the federal, state and local levels.
- Action by federal and state legislatures, educators, parent and community groups to make equity a defining characteristic of systemic educational reform.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Changing Mainstream Education

We clearly understand that our education system does not meet Congress' promise of providing "every person an equal opportunity to receive an education of high quality..." Nor can it do so while we continue to sort our children between a "mainstream" education for some and inferior and peripheral school offerings for others. We must finally recognize that diversity is a defining characteristic of our society and, therefore, of the nation's student mainstream. We must finally admit that a very large proportion of our children are girls and boys who are poor, or racially, culturally, ethnically and linguistically diverse or who have physical disabilities, and we must finally recognize their rights *within* the educational "mainstream." Only when we recognize the real needs of an educational system responsible for *all* of our children will we find the will and commit the resources to make schools places where *all* of our children have real opportunity to learn the new levels of math, science, language, thinking and problem-solving skills that tomorrow will demand. The United States cannot afford to relegate *any* of its children to the periphery of educational opportunity.

Excellence in education must be understood to include the ability to draw on and integrate information from varied sources; to analyze and solve problems; to know and appreciate one's own and other cultures; to learn and work cooperatively and collaboratively as well as competitively; and to understand and respect the diverse domains of human endeavor and performance. New concepts of intelligence must inform our curricula. Gender, race and culture biases must no longer shape school and teacher expectations and skew student assessments. All parents must be welcomed as school partners and empowered to support their children's learning.

To make an excellent education the birthright of *all*, systemic reform must be conceived and structured to align resources with needs. We must end the pattern of providing the least to those who need the most. *Educate America* examines several of education's structural elements which today constitute the institutional framework of an inequitable and unjust American system of education. Each element is examined separately — but to achieve equity in education, all must be reformed *together*. Allowing any one of our education system's support structures to remain inequitable will ensure continued inequity of opportunity in our schools.

The Schools We Want

The schools we want will provide real opportunity to learn for all children of both genders, including the poor; the racially, culturally and linguistically diverse, and those with physical disabilities. They will practice what has already been proven effective in empowering the "failing 40%" of public school students. They will embody specific principles of equity to ensure excellence of educational opportunity for *all* students.

Opportunity To Learn Standards

Past education reforms have targeted the "mainstream" and have largely ignored children most in need of real educational opportunity. Today, reform that does not deliberately address what Jonathan Kozol calls the "savage inequalities" in school resources and programs will not transform our national system into one of opportunity for all. National standards may improve the quality of education in schools attended by the relatively advantaged, but we must be equally concerned about the schools that are already failing to meet such standards as have been set for them. To achieve the national systemic reform that we need, all schools must provide all of their students with real and equitable opportunities to meet whatever new learning and performance standards may be set. To ensure opportunity to learn for *all*, schools must have the resources, the commitment and the instructional capacities to assure equity of opportunity and treatment for *all*.

School Finance

Today, substantial funding differences exist among schools of the same district, among districts of the same state, and among states — and the differences are linked to 1) racial, ethnic and economic status, and 2) inequities in educational resources and in student achievement. "Separate but equal" schooling was declared unconstitutional in 1954; in the 1990s our funding formulas create schools that are not only separate but decidedly unequal.

Equitable school financing must recognize that differing needs and circumstances require different interventions and incur different costs. Funding should consider what dollars actually buy in different settings, the extent to which programs and services are provided to *all* groups, and the degree to which *all* students benefit from public education services.

Local, state and federal governments share responsibility for equity in school finance. Current systems deny equal educational opportunity to children in property-poor districts where poor, racial minority and limited English proficient children are overrepresented. State and federal "categorical" funding meant to supplement presumably equal "regular" programs fails miserably to make up for inter- and intra-district funding inequities.

Federal and state governments must accomplish significant school finance reform and empower needy schools to give their students an opportunity to learn. State and federal governments can: 1) shift the focus of assistance from remediation for individually disadvantaged children to structural improvement of whole schools; 2) enforce compliance with "supplement, not supplant" requirements of categorical assistance programs; and 3) enact national and state finance equity legislation that requires equitable financing *within* states, and equalization of funding *among* states to ensure a high-quality education for all children.

Family Empowerment

Poor nutrition, poor health, emotional stress from neighborhood violence, unplanned pregnancy and unprepared parenthood are some of the poverty-connected inequities that can severely decrease students' real opportunities to learn. Seeing that *all* children enter school with a fair chance to succeed is therefore essential for successful systemic reform in education. Schools can accomplish much through parenting programs, early childhood programs and comprehensive health and health education programs. They can do even more through collaboration with other community entities to improve the quality of children's lives and increase family support for children's education.

Family empowerment requires ready access to community services, assurance that services are appropriate to children's and families' needs, and must focus on the whole family. School-community efforts on behalf of families must be made in an atmosphere of respect and must at all times emphasize improving the quality of children's experiences.

We must break down traditional barriers between schools, human service agencies, the private sector and other community entities. We must change the patterns of duplicative, fragmented and disconnected services to those least able to integrate them. Federal and state, as well as local governments can support school/community collaboration for family empowerment as an element of systemic educational reform.

Preparing Teachers for the New Mainstream: Pre-Service

Schools cannot provide equity of educational opportunity in the absence of a professional teaching corps equipped to teach *all* students. By the year 2035, 50% of the nation's students will be children of color, many of whom will be of other-than-English language backgrounds, and many of whom will be children of the desperately poor. Yet currently, the K-12 teaching profession is largely white, monolingual and female, with little direct knowledge about or experience of children of diversity. In all socioeconomic groups — in rural, suburban or urban schools — teachers formulate expectations based on economic class, gender and race. The difficulty of recruiting experienced teachers for urban, poor and diverse schools is well known.

In the absence of sufficient diversity within the teaching profession, institutions of higher education bear the burden of equipping candidates to teach effectively in settings of diversity. This represents a clear challenge, since the demographics of the teaching profession in schools of education are about the same as those in elementary and secondary education — except that a much higher proportion of schools of education professors is male — and those who instruct teacher-candidates may often lack substantial teaching experience in urban schools, training in gender-fair or multicultural teaching techniques, or substantial personal interracial or intercultural experiences.

There are teaching approaches that have been proven effective with minority students: they are characterized by teachers' own content knowledge, understanding and respect for their own and other cultures, high expectations for diverse students' success, ability to link challenging curriculum to students' cultural resources, and a strong commitment to equity. Collaborative, "connected" learning and attention to gender-related learning styles are key to gender-equitable learning environments.

Significant research has also identified key elements that predict success in the pre-service preparation of teaching candidates, but few schools of education embody them. School-university collaborations to improve the education of teachers of diverse students suffer from insufficient funding, absence of diversity among key staff and limited knowledge of diversity issues among staff and principal investigators. Although national accreditation agencies have begun to incorporate preparation for multicultural education in teacher certification standards, those standards are minimally reflected in what schools of education actually provide.

The federal and state governments can affect teacher preparation by encouraging the adoption of standards for teacher preparation programs that include: 1) professional acknowledgment of the importance of cultural sensitivity and commitment to equity; 2) development of teachers' content knowledge; 3) linking content knowledge, experience with diversity and instructional strategies; 4) acquisition of knowledge and experience of diversity through involvement with the diverse; and 5) practicum and/or student-teaching experience in settings of diversity. Federal leadership can also encourage coordination of teacher certification requirements; it can support recruitment and training of diverse teachers; and it can fund research on the relation of learning style to culture and gender.

Preparing Teachers for the New Mainstream: In-Service

Continuing professional development is the essential link between the realities of classroom practice and reformed educational goal setting, accountability, and curricular upgrading. Accomplishing systemic education reform for *all* students will require making professional development an integral element of all "categorical funds" programs for disadvantaged and underachieving students as well as an integral part of "whole school" and other school improvement efforts.

Federal and state assistance funds committed to professional development are needed to improve regular classroom teachers' ability to provide equal learning opportunities for *all* students. The inadequacy of current "remedial" approaches is clear. Pullout instruction for 20–40 minutes per day has limited usefulness for students marginalized by the curriculum, instructional practices, classroom management practices, assessment practices, and other interactions in the regular classrooms where they spend most of their time. Teachers will not change their practices until they can learn new methods, adapt them to their own needs and resources, and choose from among effective programs. In-depth and ongoing in-service training and development of teachers, based on the best and most current research into effective teaching and learning strategies, is essential for improving learning opportunities. In-service training and development can empower teachers as education professionals, enhance their ability to share with colleagues, and increase their participation in the decisions that affect their classroom experiences.

Student Assessment and Testing

The nation's history of using tests to sort children for differential educational opportunities is a long one. Clearly, testing shapes curriculum and teaching. Biased assessment instruments, policies and practices must not be allowed to limit opportunities to learn and narrow or dilute curricula and instruction. Standardized testing is associated with known barriers to learning — such as tracking and "ability grouping" that produce within-school segregation of minority groups — and with minority-student retention rates that are three to four times higher than for white students. Further, the pressures to improve average school scores promote neglect of higher-order learning skills, especially in low-income schools where drill is more common than the encouragement of student investigation.

Alternatives to traditional and norm-referenced testing ("authentic" testing and assessment) promote instruction for complex thinking and problem solving, and not only provide feedback about the content students have *learned*, but also provide feedback about what they have *learned to do*. Proponents of alternative "authentic" testing and assessment methods argue that they promise to be more useful measures of student learning and development. But unless teachers are adequately trained in their use — and especially in their use as diagnostic tools for improving learning opportunity — their promise may be wasted. More importantly, no *test* can compensate for failure to *teach*. Until our education system equitably reforms schools' resources and processes, our children will still be sorted for exposure to radically different curricular content, teaching methods and expectations, counseling practices and personal treatment.

More than 100 national civil rights, education and advocacy organizations have endorsed the "Criteria for Evaluation of Student Assessment Systems" developed by the National Center for Fair and Open Testing (FairTest), which with the Council for Basic Education co-chairs the National Forum on Assessment. National adoption of the criteria would ensure that student assessments create tools for — rather than barriers to — educational opportunity for *all* students.

Recommendations

Educate America's final section on "recommendations" summarizes the principles necessary for equitable education for all and identifies federal, state and local actions that would integrate reform efforts to include equity as an essential element of educational excellence.

CHANGING MAINSTREAM EDUCATION

The Congress hereby declares it to be the policy of the United States to provide to every person an equal opportunity to receive an education of high quality regardless of his [or her] race, color, religion, sex, age, handicap, national origin or social class. (U.S. Congress 1981: brackets added)

A New "Mainstream"

As advocates of equity for all children, we challenge the common, though usually unarticulated, assumption that the American educational "mainstream" is white, middle-class, male-dominant, English-speaking, without disabilities and of Anglo-American culture. The corollary of this assumption is that other girls and boys — poor, or racially, culturally, ethnically and linguistically diverse, or with disabilities — exist on the educational periphery as exceptions with special problems to be corrected, deficits to be made up, and needs to be met before they are fit to join the educational "mainstream."

The logic of this view divides our children between two student bodies — "mainstream" and peripheral — and defines two distinct sets of educational parameters, making it seem natural to measure the quality of education by "mainstream" achievement while equity is measured by the extent to which peripheral boys and girls are given access to educational offerings and experiences designed to meet the needs and characteristics of "mainstream" students. It is this dualistic imaging of students that allows some to frame debate about national educational reform in terms of a cruel choice between educational excellence and educational equity (O'Day and Smith 1992).

We reject the exclusionary approach for which the term "mainstream" has become a code word. Our children are of both genders, many nations, every ethnic group and all economic backgrounds. They speak many languages, reflect all types and conditions, and represent all individual talents and abilities. And they are as different from each other within their groupings — boy to boy, Latina to Latina, African American girl to African American boy, and so on — as they are different from each other by group. In all their diversity, they make up the true mainstream of our student population and it is our responsibility to meet their diverse needs as the needs exist — not as we find it convenient. We owe them all schools that give each the opportunity to develop knowledge, skills and understanding at the highest possible levels. We owe them schools that expect to educate, are equipped to educate, and are committed to educate a student body that mirrors the rich diversity of our people. Schools that expect less, or that are only capable of less, fail their students and the communities that support them. In the national search for educational excellence, therefore, equity is not a secondary goal that can be postponed. Equity in education is a necessary condition for national educational excellence.

Inequities raise barriers to educational excellence. Today our schools provide excellence for the top 20% of students, mediocrity for the next 40%, and they fail miserably the lowest-achieving 40% among whom boys and girls who are poor and of racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity are over-represented. Failure to educate Native Americans is linked to the social, political and economic barriers raised against them (Department of Education 1991). Dropout rates, average achievement scores, graduation rates, teen-pregnancy rates and expulsion rates all reflect school failure. Gender bias in schools' hiring, governance, curricula and practices is widespread. Drugs and assault haunt our schools. If U.S. citizens abroad were subjected to the violence that many of our students face daily, our government might well intervene with military force. In Los Angeles:

> Every day thousands of students residing in East and South Central Los Angeles attended overcrowded schools with inferior facilities, inferior curricula and inferior libraries. Overcrowded schools were principally attended by ethnically diverse, language diverse and poor students; they were limited to lower per-pupil expenditures than schools in more affluent neighborhoods; they had less experienced and less well-trained administrative, support and instructional staffs... *Allocation of facilities, acreage, school capacity, air conditioning, restrooms, school size, classroom size, portable v. permanent classrooms, playground space, site maintenance, library books — all educational resources (structural characteristics of the actual institutions providing educational services) varied significantly and substantially between schools according to their size and ethnic concentration, with the disparities overwhelmingly favoring White majority schools at the expense of Latino, AfroAmerican and Asian American majority schools* (emphasis in the original). Ethnically/linguistically diverse schools were significantly enrolled over capacity, were overcrowded, and on year round schedules; they had inadequate facilities and they provided significantly lesser educational opportunities because of the unequal allocation of facilities. (Espinosa and Ochoa 1992)

Gender bias in virtually all aspects of education, reported in *How Schools Shortchange Girls* (AAUW 1992), creates patterns of differential education for male and female students. These patterns are evident in:

- Discouragement of female students both through formal curricular materials and informal classroom interaction;
- Differential course-taking, especially in math and science;
- Differential assessment and testing: methods, skill areas, format, content and context;
- Differential expectations and attitudes of teachers, administrators and parents based on a combination of sex, race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

The inequities that blight the educational hopes of so many are inextricably linked, as the failure of attempts to remove them piecemeal clearly demonstrates. Putting an end to discriminatory school funding, for example, so that every school had science labs, computers, adequate scientific apparatus and libraries, would not of itself remove the barriers to learning raised by differential expectations and discriminatory counselling, placement and teaching practices that promote the achievement of white, middle-class boys over other boys and girls. Nor would ending the discriminatory mis-classification of Limited English Proficient boys and girls as learning disabled automatically remove the learning barriers raised by inadequate language programs, a hostile school environment, gender and culture-biased curricula or testing that is biased or unrelated to their actual learning experiences.

To achieve educational excellence for all, our educational systems and our schools must be comprehensively restructured on the principle of equity. That is the unequivocal meaning that we, as advocates of educational equity, give to the term "systemic reform." Failing such restructuring, what will schools characterized by inequity do when confronted by high-quality, content-driven curriculum frameworks except fail to implement them? Will certifying failure with a national instrument make the failure less tragic in our children's lives? Clearly it is not enough to define new content or to set new goals for student outcomes if we do not also recreate our schools as places where all children are expected to learn and where they will find:

- freedom from sexual and racial harassment;
- a nurturing atmosphere;
- programs effective in creating learning opportunities;
- teachers who understand and care about them;
- teachers who know both how and what to teach;
- teachers empowered to do their professional best.

We must recreate our schools as places where boys and girls learn inter-personal, inter-cultural and inter-gender respect and appreciation from their most important teachers: the structures and interactions of the school itself and its adult models.

A New Goal: Equity In Excellence

As advocates of educational equity, we believe that today's movement toward national systemic reform is a moment of opportunity that must be seized to redesign and restructure public schools so that all girls and boys have the opportunity for excellent education. Equity must be one defining characteristic of those schools. The task requires acknowledging the ever-increasing importance of well-educated, highly skilled men and women as our nation's indispensable human capital. Our economy requires high levels of intellectual abilities and complex skills in providing new services, with sharpened sensitivities for perceiving ever-changing problems and far-ranging abilities to solve them. As Deborah Meier, founder and principal of New York's Central Park East Secondary School, put it (Lockwood 1993):

> I find it absurd to pretend that employers are dissatisfied because students don't know the dates of the Civil War. It's clear that they are not finding some kind of rigorous work habits in youth — a sense of initiative, making judgments, and using evidence well.

Our society requires citizens of all groups and both genders who have the developed knowledge and skills to participate effectively in community life as workers, citizens, parents, leaders and role models for our children. And our democratic ideals demand that the education required for full and equal economic and societal participation be made equally available to all.

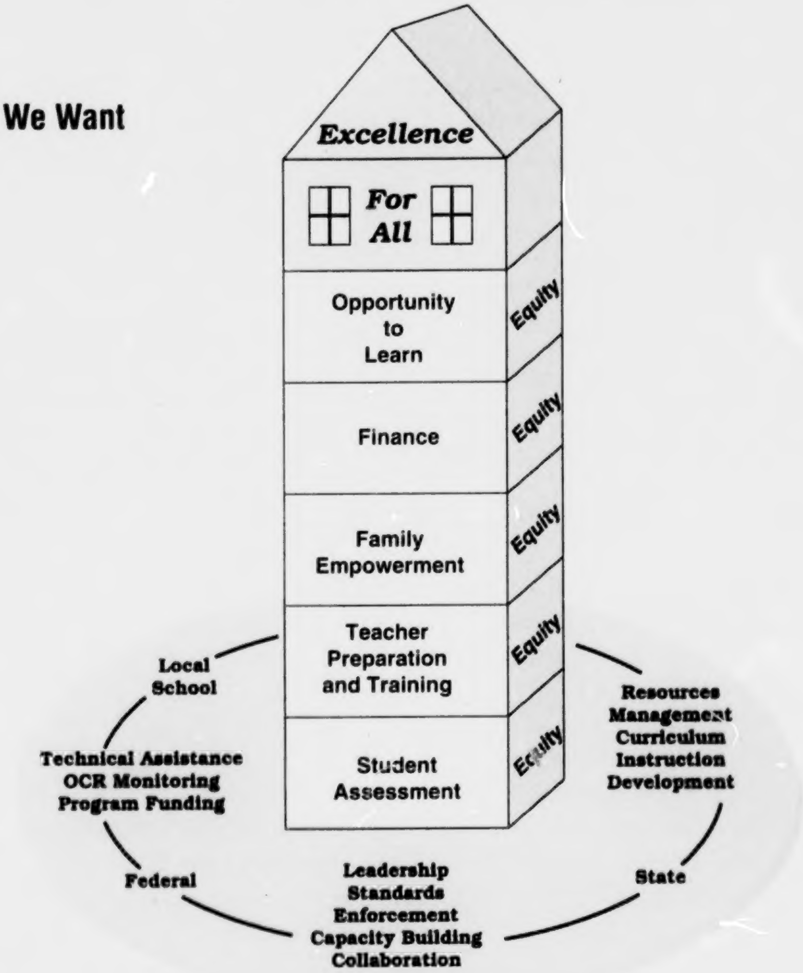
Educational reform efforts, implemented at local, state and federal levels, are aimed at making broad systemic changes. Successful efforts will integrate equitable goals, processes, achievement measures and supports. Only then can each U.S. school become a place of high-quality learning for each student that passes through its doors. Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between local, state and federal elements in a system that could make of each individual school a proud monument to American education.

Just as the quality of education is largely determined in local schools, equity issues arise from inequities that are experienced there and that take their toll there in the lives of individual students. Therefore, all schools in which only some students — or no students — now achieve educational excellence will require substantial transformation. Costa (1993) suggests that teaching/learning the skills of thinking and problem solving will become the core of the new curriculum and that:

> We will let go of our obsession with content acquisition and knowledge retention as merely ends in themselves. We will dismiss uniformity and begin to value diversity. We will replace extrinsic rewards with learning activities that are intrinsically motivating. We will deflate competitiveness to expand interdependence. We will redefine smart to mean knowing how to draw from a repertoire of strategies, knowledge and perceptions, and to take actions according to contextual demands.

FIGURE 1

The Schools We Want


Excellence
For All
Opportunity to Learn
Finance
Family Empowerment
Teacher Preparation and Training
Student Assessment
Equity
Equity
Equity
Equity
Equity
Local School
Technical Assistance
OCR Monitoring
Program Funding
Federal
Leadership
Standards
Enforcement
Capacity Building
Collaboration
State
Resources
Management
Curriculum
Instruction
Development

New Foundations

To develop new goals for the new mainstream — as we have described it — will require building new conceptual and attitudinal foundations on which schools can restructure. For example, many of our ideas about ability, about excellence and about the teaching-learning process are based on outmoded theories. Many of our ideas of intelligence itself are based on work completed in the early 1900s — work significantly biased by racist and sexist theories of inherent inequalities (Gould 1981; Gilligan 1982). Gender bias inherent in traditional definitions of intelligence and ways of learning has been documented by Gilligan, Belenky and others. For example, stressing the narrow areas in which "intelligence" has traditionally been sought excludes and trivializes the strengths of female students of all ethnic and racial groups in such areas as moral judgment, "connected knowing," and analysis (Gilligan 1982, 1988; Belenky 1986).

New theories are challenging accepted concepts of what constitutes intelligence itself. Harvard University psychologist Howard Gardner distinguishes seven intelligences, each of which constitutes intellectual "talent" and "giftedness": linguistic, logical-mathematic, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, inter-personal, and intra-personal (Gardner 1985). Traditional views of intelligence, Gardner argues, have focused almost exclusively on the linguistic and logical-mathematic, ignoring other intelligences — for instance, those that underlie the abilities of the athlete, the dancer and the mime. And at Yale University, psychologist Robert J. Sternberg (1989) has developed a three-part theory of what makes up mental ability, suggesting that:

- Intelligence is always socioeconomically and culturally shaped;
- Intelligence is related to the ability to process and apply information; and
- Intelligence is demonstrated by the ability to learn from experience.

In Sternberg's view, a good measure of one's intelligence would be to take a trip to a completely different culture, where success in meeting ordinary physical and social needs depends on the ability to find significant meaning in signs, symbols and expressions experienced in unfamiliar contexts (Miller 1986). For successful negotiation of a culture completely different than one's own, for example, the ability to infer the appropriateness or inappropriateness of one's behavior may well be more important than an ability to master textbook rules of a foreign grammar or to quickly compute a currency exchange.

Long-ingrained attitudes about "who" can learn "what" form a significant part of the foundations on which our school system is built. We have, as a nation, let racism, sexism, classism and elitism warp our thinking until we find it difficult to conceive of a win-win society in which educational excellence is widely and routinely available and shared by all girls and boys. We must learn to alter the view of schools as arenas in which those who share in a "common" culture balance their needs against those of "others" who come to school from "diverse" cultures (O'Day and Smith 1993). This view parallels the exclusionary "mainstream" concept challenged earlier. It is not only undemocratic, it denies the reality that the common culture of the United States is still evolving and is yet to be shaped from the full and free interactive participatory development of all its plural roots — and that schools have a responsibility to nurture all our roots and to educate all our children to the reality and richness of their world and nation.

The new foundations needed for achieving equitable goals for a new mainstream include the practical and tangible as well as the theoretical and attitudinal. The experiences of Chicago's Prescott Elementary School and of the public schools of Yonkers, New York, illustrate the kinds of problems faced by schools that are trying hard to restructure and to provide high-quality opportunities to learn in settings that traditionally have been places of "student failure."

Prescott Elementary School is a low-income neighborhood school where committed staff and community efforts have earned it national media attention as one of the most improved schools in the country. In recent (May 1993) testimony presented to the National Governors' Association Task Force on Education, Dr. Donald R. Moore described the Prescott model as focused not only on the school,

> ...where students in fact spend less than 20% of their waking hours during a given school year, but on the school community, which includes the full spectrum of institutions and individuals that touch a student's life....Note further that Prescott's educational process can improve student outcomes only if it changes the quality of students' day-to-day experiences. From our perspective, improving the quality of students' day-to-day experiences, not just in school but in the school community, is the core of creating the opportunity to learn.

But:

> ...(Prescott) lacks many of the resources and prerogatives that suburban schools just ten miles to the north take for granted, resources that are critical for providing a fair opportunity to learn. For example, three years ago, the school threw away its most out-dated library books, many of which were infested with roaches. And the Local School Council spent $13,000 of its discretionary funds to buy new books. But they still are forced to keep hundreds of library books containing obsolete and inaccurate information, like this 1957 edition of Exploring Earth and Space which says that "Before many years,... man's dream of landing on the moon can become a reality." Further, the school has no science lab and virtually no science equipment.

Traditional foundations of material support for schools based on exclusionary definitions of the "mainstream" mean that Prescott Elementary is frustrated in its efforts to create learning opportunities. Overcrowding means that students must be tutored on stairways; an audiologist must test a hard-of-hearing child in a room where other children are being taught. The school's playground has no grass or play equipment; both the teachers and the students bring their own toilet paper to school. Union agreements, added to funding scarcity, make it impossible for Prescott to carry out a planned expansion of instruction and expansion of services to families and community.

In Yonkers, New York, several years after the successful desegregation of the city's schools, the Board of Education found evidence of continued discrimination against African American and Latino students through seven "vestiges of segregation":

1. Level of minority achievement;
2. Self-esteem and attitudes of students toward education and the educational process;
3. Relationships between majority and minority students;
4. Attitudes and effectiveness of teachers and administrators in educating majority and minority students in integrated schools and classrooms;
5. Continuing need for adjustments in curriculum and programs to facilitate quality education in integrated environments under the existing desegregation remedy;
6. Continued disparities in the quality of school facilities and resources; and
7. Community perceptions concerning Yonkers schools and the quality of education under the current desegregation plan. *(United States v. City of Yonkers* 1993)

These are critical factors in Yonkers' students' opportunity to learn. In 1993 the U.S. District Court agreed that they are unacceptable "vestiges of segregation." Yonkers Schools have carefully designed a comprehensive improvement plan to address them, only to find itself without the financial resources to do so. The School Board's hope of obtaining necessary financial assistance from the City of Yonkers and New York State now rests in a legal suit before the federal court.

Responsibility: Who Has It and Who Takes It?

Education in the United States is a function of local communities; "front line" responsibility for our children's opportunities to learn, therefore, lies with local districts and local schools. Local communities and their schools, however, vary widely in their historic, ethnographic, geographic and economic characteristics — and in their abilities to meet their students' needs. What these differences can mean for a school seeking to improve the learning opportunities of inner-city children is illustrated above in Dr. Donald R. Moore's descriptions of conditions at Prescott Elementary School. Recognizing local responsibility for education, Moore outlined for the National Governors' Association Task Force on Education (May 1993) a process whereby local districts and schools can identify their own needs and plan their own approaches to meeting high educational standards without sacrificing local autonomy to a "top-down" restrictive mandate. Through a cyclical process of improvement, schools can draw on existing knowledge about promising practices to design their own paths to success. In the cyclical process advocated by Moore, schools would systematically take the following major steps:

- Analyze student outcomes that are centrally mandated and develop additional locally desired outcomes;
- Investigate relevant research about promising practices in the areas of school leadership, school environment, parent/community involvement, learning experiences (in and out of school) and assistance for change;
- Assess the school community's current practices in these five areas and the outcomes that students are currently achieving;
- Formulate an improvement plan that incorporates promising practices in these five areas selected by the school;
- Implement the improvement plan;
- Evaluate both the implementation of the improvement plan and changes in student outcome;
- Strengthen the improvement plan by beginning the cycle again.

Local control of education is not only a long-standing tradition, it is a cherished one. Prescott Elementary's and Yonkers City Schools' experience makes it clear, however, that local districts and schools cannot bear their responsibility alone. State and federal government also have responsibilities, among which assuring a fair distribution of educational resources is an important one. Without resource assurance, schools in impoverished communities will remain unable to educate. State and federal government also play vital roles in developing and articulating consensus about what we want our children's learning opportunities to be. Furthermore, local control is democratic control only when all sectors of the local community are fairly represented. When local imbalances create educational inequities, state and federal government have a responsibility to protect all students' opportunity to learn.

Another important area of state responsibility lies in assessing school quality. Although student outcomes are the final measure of school success, state standards should provide the bases for assessments that permit state education agencies (SEAs) and local education agencies (LEAs) to identify school needs and strengths systematically. Capitalizing on local strengths is critical for state and district capacity building; systematic prioritizing of needs is an essential step in developing, implementing and monitoring school improvement.

State and federal governments share responsibility for the environment, opportunities and limitations within which schools operate. The evidence suggests that neither states nor the federal government have adequately met their responsibilities for assuring educational equity. Nor, although their roles are not the same, are state and federal actions insulated from each other. Needed are clearly articulated and effectively implemented federal policies that can influence and encourage states to recognize equity as a necessary condition of excellence. In *Twenty Years On: New Federal and State Roles To Achieve Equity In Education*, Cynthia G. Brown and Jill E. Reid (1987) contrasted state equity enforcement before and after the Civil Rights Act of 1964. They found that in 1964 when the Civil Rights Act was passed:

> ...state governments provided virtually no civil rights leadership and little more in education, despite the fact that "education" was constitutionally recognized as a "state function." In 20 years, state governments have changed dramatically, including in the education area.... A significant change has been the adoption or enactment of antidiscrimination constitutional provisions and statutes, and in several states, laws and programs aimed at achievement of equity goals more far-reaching than federal civil rights laws.

This suggests that states are influenced by federal leadership emphasizing the importance of educational equity. An interesting finding by Brown and Reid was that while state equity efforts are uncoordinated, uneven, unequal and far from sufficient:

> State equity activities have evolved in spite of little direct encouragement by the federal government except for funding under Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and OCR requirements with regard to vocational education. The major exception to this is the state programs which were strengthened pursuant to the Education of the Handicapped Act (EHA). For example, EHA required every state to establish complaint resolution processes.

Still, in several states, Brown and Reid found that the federally required investigation and resolution of EHA complaints were virtually the only equity activities connected to education. The suggestion is strong that federal leadership for equity in education is vitally needed and that careful inclusion of implementation monitoring can be effective in promoting change at the local level. If our federal and state governments truly mean to make all of our schools places of excellent learning opportunity for all, then they must cooperate to see that all local schools are successfully empowered to restructure.

The following chapter, The Schools We Want, outlines our vision of schools restructured for excellence and equity. Subsequent chapters discuss systemic inequities of the traditional approach to public education and analyze systemic educational reform for excellence on the principles of equity. For "the schools we want" to become the national norm, Opportunity To Learn Standards are needed to assure that schools can and do provide educational opportunities for *all* children to meet high achievement and performance standards. School Finance, Family Empowerment, Teacher Preparation, both pre-service and in-service, and Student Assessment and Testing are critical and fundamental components of the systemic educational reform that our nation needs (Figure 1). District, state and federal policies and programs must address these components from a clear equity perspective to create excellence of learning opportunity for *all* children.

THE SCHOOLS WE WANT

Equity in education is much more than a matter of access. It is a matter of creating real opportunity to learn in the schools that most poor, racially, culturally and linguistically diverse children attend. The quality of a school and the opportunities to learn that it provides to its individual students depends upon both what is taught and how it is taught. Chicago's Prescott Elementary School and Yonkers City Schools, already referred to, are only two examples of a growing number of schools that are making significant improvements in the quality of learning opportunities that they provide to traditionally underserved students. A growing literature describing effective programs and strategies convinces us that much is actually known about how to improve the quality of education for traditionally "underachieving" students.

The Accelerated Learning model developed at Stanford University by Henry Levin (1987), for example, replaces the "lower track" in which low-achieving students are offered only "remediation" with a "high status knowledge" program that successfully applies principles of organizational psychology to teach abstract reasoning skills in an innovative and engaging curriculum with clear and measurable learning goals. The Team Accelerated Instruction model developed at Johns Hopkins University replaces traditional instructional methods with an approach that combines individualized instruction and cooperative learning to prepare student group members to succeed on individual assignments. In Sheltered English classes, limited-English students develop their English language acquisition while learning content, concepts and reasoning skills. Peer tutoring, mentoring and coaching strategies have proven themselves in providing underachieving minority students with educational skills and increased expectations for themselves and their classmates.

As such writers as bell hooks, Carol Gilligan and Nell Noddings point out, these are strategies that improve learning for both girls and boys and that counter the gender-biased traditions of education (hooks 1984; Gilligan 1982; Noddings 1986). They are but a few examples of what we believe all of our schools could discover, adapt and apply. The following discussion of how schools can address equity as an integral part of their efforts to restructure for excellence is meant to illustrate our vision of schools that provide opportunities to learn for all students.

Organization and Management

The schools we want will incorporate the principle of equity in hiring, placement, and advancement policies and practices, breaking the traditional pattern that concentrates power as the prerogative of white males. Freed of a strangling centralized office bureaucracy and custodial monopoly, schools with adequate budgets and budgetary discretion could guarantee the safety and cleanliness of their plant and provide adequately for programs and processes to meet clear and high-level curriculum, opportunity to learn and assessment standards. They should have in place resource standards for identifying the technology, computer and lab equipment and library materials required for effective learning of their chosen curricular content.

Partnerships in governance could give successful teachers meaningful influence in the classroom and the school. Committees for curriculum, instruction, school climate and discipline can include teachers, students and parents. Creative pairing of successful schools, programs and teachers can help to make capacity building an ongoing management function. Teacher and student learning teams should be interdisciplinary, thematic and multi-year, and assign each student an adult advisor/advocate. Schools should function within community learning environments characterized by collaboration with museums, businesses and other local institutions and social service agencies. Thus, they would serve as vital community resources, linking students to health services and information, and linking families to social and community services and training such as literacy, early parenting, and English language learning. To engage families in the education of their boys and girls, schools must keep parents informed — in languages other than English, when appropriate — of school policies, programs and procedures. They can involve parents in school governance and offer families opportunities to fulfill meaningful and positive support roles as mentors, tutors, student advocates, and local culture/history resources.

The schools we want demonstrate flexibility of organizational structure in such matters as length of instructional day and year, class size, grouping and student assignment, providing — for example — for mixed-age grouping, mixed ability grouping, and cross-cultural or culture-specific grouping. Their organizational structures permit flexible and "alternative" programs such as student participation in other schools and other grades for particular classes. They accommodate a variety of tutoring and mentoring approaches, such as peer and adult tutoring. Internships, apprenticeship programs, independent study and the use of technology for management, teacher training and instruction should be some of the schools' repertoire of approaches.

Curriculum

Common sense dictates that for schools to teach successfully the curricula must actually lead to established learning goals, must square with the information presented in textbooks and other resources, and classroom teaching must square with both. And that for testing to be even nominally fair, children must be tested on what they have had an opportunity to learn, and must be tested without language, culture or gender bias. To meet the requirements of educational excellence on the principle of equity, however, curricula must be evaluated for more than alignment with instructional goals, textbooks, instructional practices and tests.

In the schools we want, curricula will be interdisciplinary and developmentally appropriate. Curricula will be designed, as needed, to support equity/excellence goals such as inter-gender understanding, cross-cultural communication and interaction, English-language acquisition and development, bi- and multi-lingual fluency, and equal access to "gatekeeper" courses (e.g., algebra), honors studies and advanced placement studies. Curricula will integrate the development of listening, reading, writing and speaking skills and will teach writing across the curriculum. Curricula will be multicultural across disciplines and will provide for learning bias analysis, conflict resolution, critical thinking and problem solution; promote self-esteem and confidence in boys and girls; and teach health and well being (including topics critical to sexual safety and freedom from unplanned pregnancy and motherhood/fatherhood responsibilities). They will promote character- and community building. Curricula will be reviewed for gender, racial, ethnic, linguistic, cultural and disability bias, and where the use of biased materials cannot be avoided, specific strategies for using the biased examples to teach bias analysis will accompany them.

Instructional Strategies and Classroom Management

Common sense and research again come together to emphasize the effect on learning of the personal interactions that occur daily in real classrooms. Nel Noddings (1986) examines the positive effects on students' learning and behavior when they learn to care for others and for themselves; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule (1986) argue for classrooms that emphasize collaboration and provide space for exploring diversity of opinion. A growing body of research (Cotton, n.d.) documents the barriers posed by a belief that poor and minority children are unable to achieve high levels of learning. Brophy's research (1992) points out that the teachers who consistently elicit greater gains in students are those who (also consistently):

- Place strong emphasis on expectations, on mastery of content, and on allocating the most available time for activities that accomplish mastery;
- Are effective classroom organizers and managers;
- Maximize time on task and in interactive lessons;
- Encourage teacher-student discourse, reduce time spent on seatwork and increase time spent in active learning.

Berryman and Bailey (1992) find that:

> How content is taught makes all the difference in whether the content is understood, retained and appropriately learned. If we are looking for improvements in learning, they lie, not solely, but importantly, in pedagogical changes.

In the schools we want, teachers establish rewards and incentives for positive achievement and behavior. They involve students in establishing rules and discipline standards consistent with school policy, especially with respect to inter-personal and inter-gender behaviors. The teaching style used at any given point is one of a variety, matched to specific student characteristics and appropriate to the subject content being learned — content over which the teacher her/himself has a demonstrated mastery. Students are the center of interactive learning; they are provided with hands-on experiences bolstered by field trips and the experience of mentors and real-world exploration. In classrooms of diversity, the teacher's own messages about differences — expressed through his/her own interactions and demonstrated expectations — are respectful and affirming. Such teachers are likely to use heterogeneous grouping, peer tutoring and team learning to enhance learning and to foster inter-gender and cross-cultural communication. Subject matter is organized and taught in ways that encourage students to develop cognitive and meta-cognitive skills, to think creatively and critically, and to identify and solve problems.

A supportive school administration will participate actively in the professional development of school staff, including teachers, in such areas as:

- Subject content;
- Interdisciplinary applications;
- Appropriate assessment and the use of assessment information to improve instruction;
- Higher cognitive and meta cognitive processes related to subject learning;
- Diversity in learning styles and cross-cultural communication — and their implications for learning diverse subject content.

Effective support will also include resources to provide teachers with the time to increase their involvement in school governance, participation in curriculum and instruction development, and collaboration with parents.

The Challenge

We, as a nation, must assert that the sorry and inequitable state of public education is not inevitable and will no longer be tolerated. Equity depends on much more than access to schools and their offerings. For example, we know a good deal about what drives poor and minority youth out of school — our schools can stop doing those things. There are effective pedagogies that involve students in active, creative learning — we can make their use routine rather than exceptional. We know that critical thinking is more important, more useful and more exciting than rote memory recital — we can engage *all* students in the fullest use of their minds. Abandoning the piecemeal approach to meeting the needs of historically marginalized students, we can restructure our schools to make them places of excellent learning opportunity for *all*. Incorporating the following ten principles permits schools to achieve equity in excellence as an integral element of their structure:

1. **School governance and administration are committed to the integration of equity and excellence.** All decision-making considers the potential impact on the learning opportunities of all student groups. Publicizing disaggregated school data regularly permits comparative monitoring and evaluation of learning opportunities and outcomes by race, national origin, language background, gender, disability and socio-economic status.
2. **Every school program is accessible to any student who can benefit from participation and is not based on race, national origin, gender, disability or socio-economic status.** All students have equal opportunities to make informed choices about program entry and to prepare adequately for program participation. Schools and feeder schools meet their shared responsibility to plan for and to prepare students to participate in challenging classes.
3. **All students attend school in a climate of respect, trust and regard that is safe and free from discrimination, bias and harassment.** Curriculum content, instructional materials and teaching methods acknowledge and value all students' cultures and languages.
4. **The school has resources adequate to provide all its students with meaningful opportunities to meet the highest learning standards established by the school, its district and its state.** The resources provide for a satisfactory physical plant and match the needs of the students. All students have equal access to learning equipment and technology.
5. **The curriculum provides a progressive sequence of interdisciplinary, multicultural content aligned with the highest district, state and national content standards.** It is active, cumulative and inclusive of all cultures and both genders; it reaches beyond understanding content to the development of skills for evaluating and using information; it includes exposure, instruction and experience in the fine and practical arts of diverse cultures.
6. **The school involves all students in a variety of active, student-centered instructional methods.** Instruction fosters independent and cooperative learning, mastery of learning skills, higher order thinking and second languages; it recognizes and responds to variety in learning styles, including those which may reflect culture and gender.

7. **The school assesses student learning on a frequent and continuing basis for the primary purpose of improving teaching and learning.** Assessments are aligned with learning opportunities, are conducted in a variety of formats, involve the student in self-appraisal, reflect understanding of multiple domains of intelligence and academic learning, and have equal consequences for all students assessed.
8. **The school provides a variety of co-curricular and enrichment activities to meet the academic, vocational and personal interests and needs of all students.** It actively encourages the participation of all students and all groups of students and is active in identifying and removing barriers to students' involvement.
9. **The school makes effective partners of the parents of all student groups.** It informs parents of education rights, student progress and options; consults them on policy matters; recruits them as cultural and local-history resources; welcomes them as program volunteers; and consistently involves them in short- and long-range school-wide planning and implementation.
10. **The school is an important link in a school-community network that supports a safe, caring environment of continuing and stimulating experience for children.** It provides early educational services; provides or collaborates with daycare programs; provides parenting programs for community adults; and it collaborates with community agencies and groups through referrals for health, social, recreational and cultural programs and services.

OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN STANDARDS

The most widely advocated model of national educational reform envisions national standards for student outcomes, curricular content and student assessment. States will be expected to reflect national standards in their own state-level structures and provide guidance, support, technical assistance and monitoring to ensure that standards are adopted and implemented in the local districts. Local districts, finally, will be responsible for the local schools that will educate our children to standards that equal or surpass the national standards.

But what of the many schools — especially the schools characterized by inequities — that cannot begin to meet the National Content and Assessment Standards (Eisner 1993)? In Congress, as well as among advocates of educational excellence and educational equity, strong voices are insisting that standards must include Opportunity to Learn Standards that take into account educational *inputs and processes*, not simply content and outcomes. These advocates recognize a responsibility to provide schools with access to knowledge, training, technical assistance, consulting and other forms of support necessary to develop local and state capacity. To define and achieve these standards, it will be necessary to develop comprehensive federal human resource programs within the Department of Education and to find avenues for collaboration among federal, state and local education systems in a coordinated effort to meet the varied needs of children at their local schools.

Delivery of educational opportunities (especially those defined by high-level content and high expectations of student outcomes) includes a number of elements and processes. Each of these must be assessed and designed on the bases of Opportunity to Learn Standards that are effective in bringing the benefits of educational reform to *all* students. Federal and state leadership could undertake the design of the following Opportunity to Learn Standards:

- **Resource Standards** to assure that all schools have sufficient resources to deliver high level of curriculum content and to achieve higher levels of outcomes for all students;
- **Curriculum Delivery Standards** to assure high levels of curriculum delivery to all students;
- **Outcome and Capacity Building Standards** to assure that all schools have the continued capacity to deliver quality education and are evaluated by their delivery of quality educational opportunities to all students.

These standards would include attention to such areas as:

Resource Standards for:

- Implementing and monitoring equitable finance formulas for within and between-schools, and within and between-districts;
- Coordinating equitable health and human services support and providing opportunities to access local resources and services;
- Establishing adequate facilities, including play space, classroom space, materials and equipment, libraries, science laboratories, and fine and performing arts facilities;
- Providing a safe, orderly, drug-free environment;
- Providing district and state support to assist in achieving equal access to schools' educational benefits (e.g., special programs such as accelerated learning);

- Providing ongoing training necessary to assure teacher competency in both the cognitive and affective domains;
- Providing equal access to curriculum materials, technology and data.

Curriculum Delivery Standards for:

- State, district and local alignment of curriculum, instruction, assessment and staff development proven effective with children of both genders and diverse linguistic and cultural groups;
- Challenging content coverage (e.g., access to challenging curriculum, time on task, continuity, integration);
- Content emphasis for individual students or groups of students (e.g., expectations of students' capacity to learn);
- Use of appropriate and varied teaching techniques and strategies (e.g., has variety of approaches, encourages active and collaborative learning, introduces new skills, reviews skills taught, gives appropriate feedback to students, includes self-evaluation process, etc.);
- Development or selection of instructional materials and technology;
- Teacher knowledge of subject matter content and pedagogy (e.g., subject credentials, certification, professional experiences);
- Equal access of all students to schools' most challenging programs or curriculum.

Outcome and Capacity Building Standards for:

- Ongoing, multiple-forms of continuous curriculum-based student assessments that are free of gender, culture and language bias;
- Collection, interpretation and usage of data (disaggregated by grade, race, gender, ethnicity, language characteristics, and socioeconomic status) measuring student's opportunity to learn and resulting outcomes, including participation, attendance, test and assessment outcomes, and graduation rates;
- Continuing access to educational research and pedagogy information;
- Continued assessment of bias in institutional and classroom practices, text books and educational materials, and assessment procedures and instruments;
- Cyclical district and school improvement processes based upon measuring of opportunity to learn;
- Effective technical assistance to schools;
- Funding of school in-service professional training and development that familiarizes teachers and parents with standards and develops their capacity;
- Monitoring district and school improvement processes;
- Timely identification and corrective assistance for schools that fail to meet standards;
- Recognition and reinforcement of school successes;
- Organizational structures that permit and encourage staff to learn from experience and from each other.

To ensure that a vast majority of students achieve to the established standards, state departments of education and school districts need to conceptualize strategies in areas of school management, learning environment and community support and involvement.

School Management:

- External and internal dissemination of ongoing and multiple forms of school-based assessments that evaluate a student's opportunity to learn (e.g., policies, programs and procedures, and school services);
- Ensuring that assessments that are tied to curriculum and instruction are used for the purpose of improving teaching, learning, and educational planning;
- Inter- and intra-district articulation among schools, agencies, businesses and institutions of higher education;
- Interstate and interdistrict articulation for families and agencies serving mobile students;
- Alignment of responsibility, authority and accountability so that decisions regarding students' movement toward standards are made closest to the learner;
- Creation of integrated and coherent approaches to recruit and retain minority teachers;
- Establishing benchmarks and timelines for improved student performance and progress;
- Implementing actions to improve schools not meeting state content standards.

Learning Environment:

- Coherent, multicultural, gender-fair, interdisciplinary curricula and instruction;
- School and classroom environments conducive to student thinking, initiative development and individualization;
- Quality and quantity of multicultural and multilingual instructional and support materials;
- Flexible class size, grouping and scheduling;
- Special programs for students (e.g., parenting education);
- Coordination and inter/intra-district articulation of instructional and curriculum standards for mobile and limited English proficient students.

Community Support and Involvement

- Assessment of student/community/staff characteristics and needs, including the languages spoken in the community;
- Focusing public and private community resources on prevention and early intervention;
- Utilizing the school to empower families through coordinating access to social services and providing a necessary health, nutrition, and human services safety net to assure that all students are ready to learn;
- Bringing students out into the community in ways that provide experiences with museums, colleges and universities, businesses and agencies;
- Providing information and support to students' families in ways that make it possible for them to become involved in their children's education as well as in the school reform process.

Schools charged with implementing curricula of high academic content cannot be expected to succeed without the kind of standards and strategies described above. State adoption and implementation of the Opportunity to Learn Standards outlined above can provide badly needed guidance for local education agency and school restructuring. State and local governments must collaborate to build models of school reform that create a truly systemic approach to American education. This approach must set clear and high goals for our children's education and assure comprehensive and adequate resources and supports to the teachers and other educational professionals responsible for creating children's day-to-day opportunities to learn.

SCHOOL FINANCE

It is well recognized that public schools differ significantly in their quality — and that there also are significant inequalities of children's access to what schools *do* offer. The national pattern of school spending is clearly inequitable, with those children who need the most help to succeed educationally getting the least.

While local schools have historically depended on locally raised revenues, assuring equitable funding among local districts is increasingly recognized as a state responsibility. State governments have been assuming larger roles in regulating school financing, especially through measures meant to equalize funding between more- and less-wealthy districts, and through "categorical" assistance meant to meet students' "special" needs in local districts and schools. As the federal government strengthens its leadership role in establishing high educational standards, it must also seek more effective means to assure that states can and do provide all their schools with resources adequate to meet *all* their students' needs.

The Nature of the Problem

Linked patterns of disparity provoke serious questions about the way our schools are financed. Inequalities in per-pupil spending appear between schools, between school districts, and between states. The disparities can be extreme. A 1992 study of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) found that schools within the district varied by $1,000 in total direct expenditure per pupil per year (Espinosa and Ochoa 1992). In 1987, Mississippi's lowest-spending district spent $1,324 per pupil while its highest-spending district spent $4,018. In the same year, one New York district spent $11,544 per pupil. Of the ten lowest-spending states, six rank among the nation's top ten for percentage of children in poverty; three of the remaining four lowest-spenders are among the nation's top twenty.

Reliance on local property taxes creates inequality in per pupil spending among districts. African American, Latino, Asian/Pacific American and Native American students are disproportionately concentrated in the lowest-spending schools. Their families, on average, own less wealth and have lower per capita and family incomes than white Americans. Populous states with substantial minority concentrations show the greatest differences in per pupil expenditure between school districts. In all states, low-spending districts tend to have high concentrations of poor people, particularly poor people of color (Taylor and Piche 1991). For example, in 1987, 95% of students in Texas' poorest school districts were Mexican American; in Los Angeles, the lowest-spending elementary school was 96% Latino, while the highest-spending elementary school was slightly more than 90% white (Espinosa and Ochoa 1992).

Not surprisingly, the pattern of spending disparity parallels educational experience and school outcomes. African American, Latino and Native American children, on average, achieve lower scores on standardized tests, drop out of school at higher rates, and enroll in smaller numbers in post-high school academic or vocational education programs. They are overrepresented in special-education programs, "low-ability" and remedial basic skills tracks; are more likely to experience early grade-level failure and retention; and are more likely to be over-age on entering high school. They are under-represented in programs for the gifted and talented, in "high ability" and college preparatory tracks and in advanced placement courses.

Considerable evidence supports the proposition that spending differences translate into differences in educational quality. The study of Los Angeles schools found:

> ...structural variables that correlate strongly with schools' student achievement averages and that also correlate strongly with inequity of distribution of educational resources. (Espinosa and Ochoa 1992)

A 1990 national assessment of 8th grade mathematics programs by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) revealed a striking connection between students' economic status and what is provided for them in their classrooms. While 84% of teachers in schools with economically middle- or upper-class students received all or most of the materials and resources they asked for, 59% of teachers in schools with the largest percent of poor students received *only some or none* of the instructional materials and resources that they sought (ETS 1991). And the students whose teachers reported an inadequacy of materials and resources achieved lower mathematics proficiency attainments than those whose teachers reported that their materials and resources were adequate. Higher spending districts had smaller classes; they had higher paid and more experienced teachers and higher instructional expenditures, while students in poor school districts were more likely to lack necessary instructional resources.

Low-spending schools often provide inferior versions of a state's "standard" educational program and curriculum. Further, they are disadvantaged in their ability to provide educational services and programs vital to at-risk students — and it is in low-spending schools that poor, minority and limited English proficient students are concentrated. In spite of broad agreement among educators that pre-school child development programs, reading programs in the early grades, reduced class size, teachers with experience and with expertise in meeting special needs, and broad and in-depth curricula are particularly important for securing positive educational outcomes for poor and minority students, Taylor and Piche (1991) report that:

> It is not unusual for economically disadvantaged students in these (poor) districts to enter school without preschool experience, to be retained in the early grades without any special help in reading, to attend classes with 30 or more students, to lack counseling and needed social services, to be taught by teachers who are inexperienced and uncertified, and to be exposed to a curriculum in which important courses are not taught and materials are inadequate and outdated.

Equity vs. Equality

Differences in wealth often result in property-poor districts taxing at higher rates than property-wealthy districts while producing far fewer dollars. While this raises legitimate questions of taxpayer equity, we limit ourselves here to student equity. Equity can be measured against Congress' policy of providing every person an equal opportunity to receive an education of high quality regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, national origin or social class. State governments, too, are bound by their individual constitutions to provide public education that meet criteria for quality and equity.

Per pupil expenditure is the most common measure by which schools, school districts and states are compared. Most efforts to achieve fiscal equity have sought to equalize, within states, the per pupil expenditure of school districts to achieve what is referred to as "horizontal" equity. But only by assuming that all children are alike can equal per pupil expenditure alone be held to constitute student equity. Another concept — referred to as "vertical" equity — recognizes that children vary in their characteristics and their needs, and that their treatment is only equitable when their different characteristics are equally considered and their differing needs are equally met. Both states and the federal government have recognized that some students have special characteristics (such as disabilities, limited English language proficiency, special gifts or talents, learning disabilities, or "disadvantages" associated with poverty) and provide categorical funds to supplement the basic per pupil expenditure with additional services to meet those special needs.

Federal funding meant to help school districts meet special needs (for example, through Chapter 1, which provides funds to districts with students who live in poverty) assumes that horizontal, or per pupil expenditure equity, already exists and that federal dollars will translate into services and/or resources that some children need *in addition* to what their more affluent peers receive. Too often, however, per pupil expenditure inequity is so great that categorical funding not only fails in its intended purpose — it does not begin to compensate for the reduced quality of education available to at-risk students.

A further assumption implicit in equating equal per pupil expenditure with equity is that equal spending will be used to buy — or can buy — equal amounts of equally appropriate educational resources. Districts, of course, vary widely in the nature and extent of problems against which they must take action, salary scales, cost of living, etc. — all of which affect the amount of educational resources that a dollar can buy. While even cost-adjusted dollar amounts alone are a poor indicator of the education actually offered to students, federal or state funding formulas must be cost-adjusted as a step toward equity.

Programmatic equity measures have been suggested as better indicators of equity than per pupil expenditure, both for federal assistance and for state funding formulas. By shifting the focus from available dollars to the educational resources that those dollars actually buy, we come closer to seeing what students' actual learning opportunities are. National agreement on educational standards and on means to achieve them could be translated into state program standards, including the structures, services, curricula and implementation resources necessary to assure high-quality education. Such state standards would provide the bases for measuring equity as educational opportunity within states, within school districts and between states.

Program implementation equity measures reach even farther to ensure that effective programs and services for poor, diverse and at-risk students not only are planned and financed but that they are, in fact, provided. Probably the enacted curriculum (that to which students are actually exposed) is most strongly related to student learning. Teacher observations, surveys and questionnaires could assess curriculum enactment indicators. A critical measure would be the extent to which the curriculum is distributed across all student groups. Other measures might include the extent to which structural, material, and teacher and other personnel competencies required to implement the programs are actually in place.

Outcomes equity measures permit comparing the learning opportunities offered by different schools and districts in terms of their results. It permits assessing what matters most — the degree to which all students learn and develop. The national trend is away from norm-referenced tests and toward criterion-referenced tests that reveal a student's knowledge in a given content area. This move is more likely to provide student achievement data of increased reliability for judging schools by measuring students' actual abilities to conduct experiments, solve multiple-step mathematics problems, write an effective paragraph or computer program, formulate a hypothesis and critically examine explanations of the way his/her world works. Yet, however student achievement is measured, achievement data must be disaggregated by advantaged and at-risk groups to prevent between-group disparities to be concealed within school or district averages. Such data is needed for accountability and for decision-making at the local, state and national levels.

Aligning Federal and State Efforts

Although the federal government has increased its involvement with public education over the past quarter century, state governments bear the major responsibility for educational policy and funding. The U.S. Constitution omits any discussion of education, making it an "implied" power of the states whose constitutions require their legislatures to maintain a system of "uniform" schools or to provide a "thorough and efficient" system of education. States, in turn, historically have left the bulk of revenue-raising and decisions about programming to local governments. However, extreme differences in wealth have caused great inequality among school districts, and, over the years, a need to achieve some uniformity has led to a growth of state regulation of public schools.

Federal leadership can help states to align their educational systems with national standards. Currently, most states regulate teacher certification, length of school day, curriculum, graduation standards, attendance policies and school construction. State aid for education has increased to approximately half of the total education funding with dollars allocated for two major purposes: lessening the spending disparities between districts and assisting schools to meet special needs through action allotments, categorical aid (for example, for special education, compensatory education, bilingual education), and capital improvements and construction. A clear federal policy emphasizing equity of state and local program support for *all* students can only strengthen the hand of states facing pressures to devise and implement more equitable school funding policies. Efforts to achieve educational equality have produced court challenges of the school funding systems in many states over the last twenty years. Since the landmark California case, *Serrano v. Priest*, fourteen states have had their school finance systems declared unconstitutional; currently nineteen states have school finance cases pending before the courts. Strong federal leadership for equity in school financing — based on formulas that measure equity in terms directly related to real educational opportunity — can be an important lever assisting states to align educational resources with educational goals.

School Finance Systems

Current systems deny equal educational opportunity — at least as measured by educational resources — to children in property-poor districts in which children of racial minority and limited English proficiency are over-represented. In virtually all states, public schools are financed by systems that combine revenues from three sources: the federal government, local school districts, and state education funds.

Federal Assistance provides slightly more than six cents of each dollar spent for public elementary and secondary education through grant programs authorized by Congress to help schools meet special needs, with most money going to Chapter 1.

Local revenues provide slightly less than half of the educational dollars spent for public schools. Local governments tax real property; the higher the assessed valuation of property in a district, the greater is its ability to raise funds. Given the disparities in wealth, however, property-poor districts may not be able to raise even the minimum revenues needed though they tax themselves at rates several times higher than wealthy districts.

State funding currently accounts for approximately half of the dollars spent on public education. Given the impact of the state on local revenue raising and local spending, the importance of state policy for equity in school financing is obvious. State aid is most often based on one or a combination of the following:

- Foundation grants are meant to guarantee a minimum level of per pupil dollars to school districts. The state determines a per-pupil foundation level and the minimum tax effort that school districts are expected to make. Districts that tax at the required rate yet fail to raise the state-determined per pupil minimum receive "foundation grants" to make up the difference. In most states, however, the overall state funding level is insufficient — and the local wealth differences are too great — for foundation grants to produce equity. In some cases, the increased wealth disparity between districts, coupled with the state's failure to keep up with inflation and increased costs, has increased between-district inequity over time.
- Power equalizing reforms seek to guarantee equal revenue yield for equal tax effort regardless of assessed property wealth. It is implemented through formulas that establish a minimum revenue yield for a given tax effort. Since usually there is nothing to prevent a wealthy district from taxing itself above the required rate, wealthy districts are still able to provide higher per pupil expenditures than poor districts.

While recognizing state primacy in public education, Congress has clearly established its role of assisting states and local districts to meet the needs of at-risk students and of achieving educational equity for students of poverty and minority backgrounds. Over the years, Congress has authorized programs to assist children who face equity barriers, targeting the poor, those of limited English proficiency, children with disabilities, Native Americans, migrant children, the homeless, those discriminated against because of gender, and others with special needs. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 provided legal remedies, including lawsuits and the withholding of federal funds, to prevent educational discrimination because of race or national origin — protections that have been extended to women and girls and to students with disabilities. It is clear, however, that the Civil Rights Act has yet to bring about funding equity within school programs. For example, schools still routinely provide unequal finances for physical education and athletics of males and females. Though Congress has been aware of the need for alignment of state efforts with federal assistance, its piecemeal approach to reform and inadequate monitoring of compliance have not provided sufficient stimulus and assistance to accomplish satisfactory state and local reform.

Congressional concern for equity, as expressed in its regulations governing Chapter 1, assumes that "horizontal" equity already exists and seeks through its assistance to achieve "vertical" equity. Recipients of federal funds are expected to "supplement" rather than "supplant" regular state and local funds, which are supposed to be "comparable" to those provided in schools that do not receive Chapter 1 assistance. Taylor and Piche (1991) assert:

> The clear aim of the comparability requirement is to assure that services provided with state and local funds to educationally deprived children attending Chapter 1 schools are approximately equal to services to children in non-Chapter 1 schools, before the addition of the Chapter 1 funds...(Unfortunately), the fact is that the mandate has been applied only to deal with intradistrict inequity.

But too often, federal categorical funds are used in poor districts to meet needs routinely met through state and local expenditures in more affluent districts. Espinosa and Ochoa

(1992) found that within the Los Angeles Unified School District (within which per pupil spending varied by more than $1,000):

> Latino, Afro American and Asian American majority schools were disproportionately allocated fewer general funds than White majority schools. Although the larger Latino majority and LEP (limited English proficient) predominant schools received increases in federal and state categorical funds, those were accompanied by loss of general base funds and the net effect was lower funds per pupil.

They further report that:

> Ethnically impacted schools received less base funds while using categorical funding to complement their schools budget. Categorical funding drove a compensatory remedial curriculum meant to supplement, but that in fact substantially replaced, critical-thinking and higher-level skills offerings needed for meaningful career preparation.

Both federal and state concepts of equity must go beyond dollars to include measurements of what dollars buy, and must expand the notion of "comparable" services to reach defined "basic vital services," or a core educational program for all students. While there is debate about the exact connection between school spending and student outcomes, there is considerable recognition of the importance of certain practices and services for the success of at-risk students. An identified array of "basic vital services" would permit equity measurement of real educational opportunities. Such an array of services might include:

- Pre-school child development programs;
- Parent outreach programs;
- Social services counselling and coordination;
- Teacher-quality assurance programs (recruitment, development and reward);
- Moderate class-size policies;
- Effective pedagogies and practices;
- Structures and practices to assure equity of access to the best curricula and development opportunities offered.

In addition, state standards should be put in place to ensure the safety and livability of the school premises that our children are by law obligated to attend.

Costing-out effective programs with regard for cost of living, scale of economy, prevailing wage, etc., would translate state program standards into the funding levels needed to implement them under different conditions within states. It could also provide comparability data on which to base federal inter-state equalization measures. Federal support of funding equalization based on programmatic equity could strengthen states' ability to make the hard choices that will ensure that each district has the funds necessary to provide equitable services while retaining the right to spend as it may choose.

More than two decades of experience have shown that educational equity for poor, minority and other at-risk students cannot be achieved by a patchwork of "compensatory" services added on to a fictional "mainstream" education that serves all children equally. Equity requires finally providing what we have for too-long pretended exists — the resources and the will to provide high quality educational opportunity to whatever child enters through a public school's doors. Congress and each state must consider the equity impact of education legislation and use all available resources to restructure schools so that the concept of a "level playing field" becomes a reality for all children. Such a "level playing field" will be characterized by schools that *implement* comparable educational services that include pre-school programs, reading programs in the early grades, moderate class size, counseling and social services; that ensure the experience and certification of teachers; and that demonstrate high quality in the range and breadth of curricula.

Integrating Educational Equity

State eligibility requirements for federal programs such as Chapter 1 or Title VII could encourage systemic restructuring of state education systems through two important effects: eligibility requirements could require state adoption of standards for state restructuring, and they could help state legislators to "sell" hard equity choices to representatives of conflicting interests. State eligibility requirements for federal assistance programs could require:

- Clear, high standards for what all students should know and be able to do;
- Plans that assure a "level playing field" of vital services comparable between districts as well as between schools that receive or do not receive federal assistance funding;
- Assurance of assessment and testing practices that provide:
    - information on individual progress toward meeting state high standards;
    - information on the impact of federal assistance in enabling students to reach high standards;
    - information on individual schools' progress in enabling students to meet high standards;
- Plans to include a family-education component in all federal educational assistance programs;
- Plans for investing a part of assistance funds for professional and school development;
- Assurance that states will provide for and encourage "whole school" projects to restructure and upgrade all elements of an individual school's programs, with priority given to schools with concentrations of children targeted for assistance (e.g., poor, limited English proficient);
- Plans to meet the health, safety and social services needs of all children;
- Assurance of substantial help to schools that do not make progress.

Achieving Inter- and Intra-District Funding Equity

States receive hundreds of millions of dollars (Impact Aid) to compensate school districts for losses in local revenues or in expenses caused by federal activity within their jurisdiction. States that meet federal criteria for school funding equalization are permitted to treat portions of their Impact Aid funds as local revenues, deducting them from state funding allocations. The Impact Aid state-qualifying criteria proposed by Odden (1993) provides a model for state school funding policies that would go far towards achieving inter- and intra-district funding equity within states. Such policies would:

- Move beyond the concept of dollar inputs as the measure of educational equity to one that includes educational processes, curriculum, instructional delivery and student outcomes as necessary objects of equalization;
- Measure fiscal inputs as:
    - total current revenues from local and state sources; and
    - total current operating expenditures;
- Include educational processes and student outcomes in "horizontal" equity assessment to ensure that all students receive equal exposure to the intended curriculum and

equal distribution of scores on achievement tests as well as equal shares of fiscal resources (such as total state and local general revenue per pupil and total expenditures per pupil);

- Analyze "vertical" equity to ensure the equitable treatment of different characteristics of:
  - children (e.g. for mental disability, limited English proficiency, disadvantages of poverty);
  - school districts (e.g., isolation, scale of economy, energy costs, ethnographic change); and
  - programs (e.g., vocational education, laboratory science, advanced placement courses).

Ensuring Adequate Funding For All Schools

Even if school funding were equitable within and between districts, the economic variations between states would inevitably result in great educational differences between states. Congress could help states to achieve educational equity (including inter-state equity) by directly enacting national school finance legislation. Just that approach was proposed in a 1990 bill which proposed to apply the 14th Amendment by offering all children a fair chance for a good education. Known as the "Fair Chance Bill," H.R. 3850 illustrates a possible framework for mandating equity of opportunity for all children to obtain a high quality education. Such a mandate would:

- Require the Secretary of Education to review each state educational finance system to determine its fiscal equitability as a condition for eligibility to receive federal funds administered by the U.S. Department of Education;
- Require that the states include educational processes and educational outcomes as objects of equalization;
- Allow non-compliant states a reasonable period to submit plans to comply;
- Distribute federal funds allocated to a state found ineligible because of non-compliance directly to local educational agencies within the state, on a basis determined by the Secretary to carry out the purposes for which the funds were authorized;
- Authorize the appropriation of such funds as may be necessary to carry out a program to assure an equitable opportunity for a high-quality education to children in all the states;
- Require the Secretary to determine an equitable and appropriate formula allocating funds among the states in order to:
  - Move all states up to the funding level determined to be necessary to assure a high-quality education for all children;
  - Give greater funding to those states that provide adequate programs to meet the special needs of economically disadvantaged, physically disabled, and non-English proficient children;
  - Measure the tax-effort for education of each state in terms of its fiscal capacity and reward those states making a greater effort.

While such legislation would provide a tremendous impetus to state finance equity reform and would create an important resource for states with economic difficulties, it does not appear to be on the current agenda of political likelihood. However, the goals of H.R. 3850 do reflect a valid and unsentimental vision of what it will take to make equitable and excellent education a reality in the United States.

FAMILY EMPOWERMENT

> *It has been said that the best social program is a strong family. School-linked support efforts must help families fulfill their responsibilities for nurturing their children. Problems confronting parents often affect their children— and the converse can be true as well. Even multiple services offered to an individual may not be helpful if the needs of other family members go unmet. (Council of Chief State School Officers 1992)*

Changes in our society have increased the difficulties that families face. Mobility has reduced the availability of extended families that might help with parenting and childbearing. Patterns of increasing two-parent participation in the paid work force, the increase in divorce rates and out-of-wedlock births, growing numbers of single parent families and teenage parents — all these and others impact on the nation's families' abilities to ensure that young children have the experiences they need to prepare them for school and to give older children the support they need to benefit optimally from educational opportunity. When parents are themselves adolescent students, their own and their children's prospects are bleak indeed.

For too many families, poverty is a critical barrier to providing their children with needed supports. Certainly, children who come to school with key health and social needs unmet are not afforded an equal opportunity to learn. Lack of prenatal care, inadequate nutrition, lack of immunization and preventive care, exposure to violence, drugs or abuse, fetal alcohol abuse syndrome, and the emotional and mental disorders of early childhood are but some of the poverty-linked barriers to learning that no curricular or pedagogical reform alone can remove (Novello, Degraw and Kleinman 1992).

Any serious and committed effort to create equity of educational opportunity must include a comprehensive approach to empowering families, addressing the health and social environment barriers that limit their effectiveness as children's first teachers, best caretakers and most committed defenders (National Health/Education Consortium 1990; National Commission on the Role of the School and the Community in Improving Adolescent Health 1990). As the Committee for Economic Development has warned:

> No matter how much money you pump into schools, no matter how well you pay the teachers, fine-tune the curricula, or enrich the programs, you do not address the critical needs of a substantial segment of students unless you also concern yourself with nutrition, health care, housing, and family functioning — the factors that determine the early development of the child. If children are hungry or abused, if their minds are paralyzed by fear, or if they live in cramped squalid tenements, it is unlikely they will do well in school. (Hewlett 1991)

The dimensions of the national need for family empowerment should sober anyone who has ever expressed concern about "international competitiveness." The Carnegie Corporation (1994) reports that:

> Compared with most other industrialized countries, the United States has a higher infant mortality rate, a higher proportion of low-birthweight babies, a smaller proportion of babies immunized against childhood diseases, and a much higher rate of babies born to adolescent mothers. Of the twelve million children under the age of three in the United States today, a staggering number are affected by one or more risk factors that undermine healthy development. One in four lives in poverty. One in four lives in a single-parent family. One in three victims of physical abuse is a baby under the age of one.

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) has become a strong voice for family empowerment. It notes that within strong, supportive families, children develop a range of skills and competencies essential for meeting the responsibilities of adulthood — competencies related to health and well-being, personal and social functioning, cognitive and creative development, vocational choice and pursuit, and citizenship. Families in distress may need assistance to provide basic care, comfort, and nurture for their children — assistance that may include financial and other help in providing basic necessities such as shelter and medical care. Children and youth may also suffer illness, or mental disabilities, learning disorders or behavioral problems requiring individualized interventions.

> As educators, we share responsibility for preparing our nation's youth for adulthood with families and numerous agencies and organizations. These groups include public and private human service agencies, the public health system, private health care providers, the courts, religious organizations, institutions of higher education, and other national and community-based nonprofit organizations. We believe that working jointly to support the development of children and youth is the most effective strategy for the prevention of youth problems and the achievement of our educational goals. (CCSSO 1992)

Family empowerment is not a simple goal. Together, schools and communities must seek ways to address many facets of empowerment to support and strengthen the positive influence of the family. The following outlines some ways that families may be empowered so that the futures of all children and youth will be made more hopeful.

Parenting Education and Programs

Too often, as a society, we seem to assume what clearly is untrue: that the biological ability to produce a child ensures an ability to provide for the child's needs. Parenting and providing nurture for a child's development is a complex, demanding and critical task. As Hamburg (1992) has pointed out, the prenatal months and first five years of a child's life are characterized by "rapid growth, specific environmental needs, maximum dependence on caretakers, great vulnerability and long-time consequences of failures in development." This initial phase of a child's development has a strong impact on her/his entire future life. In this period, a child not only forms attachments that shape his or her possibilities for human relationships and social skills but also the building blocks for learning skills (Hamburg 1992). Frederick Goodwin (1993), Director of the National Institutes of Mental Health, asserts that the quality of parenting and early stimulation during the first five years can modify the child's IQ by as much as 20 points. The consequences of early childhood damage are seen, especially in poor communities, across the nation.

Most parents of all groups want their children to succeed in their learning activities. But many are unaware of the simple, but powerful and inexpensive, things they can do to further their children's development. We can make a major contribution to educational equity and to the economic and social well-being of the nation by ensuring that all parents can prepare their children for school and have the knowledge, skills and resources to support them adequately in their education.

Adolescent parents are especially in need of support, counseling and knowledge to meet their infants' and their own needs. Adolescent fathers too often stumble into fatherhood with no preparation or clear sense of responsibility. Too often, as well, they are the inheritors of gender biases and stereotypes that prevent their assumption of any meaningful role as a parent and that increase, rather than reduce, the problems faced by their female partners.

Adolescent mothers are at risk for giving birth to babies that are low birth weight, addicted to drugs or who have AIDS (Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium and The Network 1993). Equally tragic is the risk that bearing a child currently poses for an adolescent mother's own quality-of-life expectations, since the age at which she bears her first child is closely related to her chances of living in poverty and becoming dependent on welfare (Child Trends 1992). This is particularly urgent when we realize that less than 3 percent of adolescent pregnancies result in placements for adoption (Bachrach et al. 1992). We must greatly improve and increase the availability of programs that meet the needs of adolescent mothers, as persons in their own right, as well as the health and well-being needs of their babies.

Several states and localities already provide parenting programs that foster empowerment. For example, Missouri's Parents as Teachers Program provides health screening, home visits, consultations, classes, parenting education during pregnancy to any individual or family regardless of income level, and referrals to other services. It provides strong evidence of the value of integrating parenting education with health care and social stimulation. Sound and effective parenting programs ensure (Hamburg 1992):

> **Comprehensiveness:** Parenting education services need to include health care, social and other family support services (e.g., family planning, day care and substance-abuse programs) and should give serious attention to convenience of access to services.
>
> **Continuity:** Each child should have continuing relationships with professionals who know him/her, know his/her family, and know the family's background.
>
> **Coordination:** School, preschool, social services and health care should be connected to provide a "seamless web" of services.
>
> **Accessibility:** Outreach is essential. Many of the children most in need of health, social and educational services are not receiving them now; their parents do not know what they are, where they are or how to make use of them. Services must be accessible, and service-providers must be able to deal with clients' linguistic and cultural diversity.
>
> **Accountability:** Quality control is an essential element of parenting programs that meet high professional standards for both practice and prevention. Successful parenting programs not only meet an immediate need for services, but also establish a foundation of prevention that will reduce future problems and costs.

Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education programs foster children's physical, social, and language development and general learning. Today, a majority of young children are served by some type of early childhood, pre-kindergarten programs provided by public and private resources and implemented through a variety of approaches. A consistent finding of research on early childhood programs is that while all groups of children benefit from them, poor children benefit the most, receiving stimulation and experiences that they may not find at home.

Increasing numbers of public schools have extended their services in response to the needs of three- to five-year-olds. Their programs include Head Start, fee for services programs, tax supported programs, and programs funded by philanthropy. They can make a difference for children, especially when they are high-quality child development programs. While there will always be a need for a diversity of providers of preschool education, public schools need to continue to extend services to this area, since there is strong evidence that quality preschool programs contribute to current learning potential and future outcomes. Benefits to society include increased participation in education, reduced crime and delinquency, improved work skills and productivity, reduced welfare dependency and better health (Taylor and Piche 1991; CCSSO 1992; Melaville 1991). Early childhood education is not only an effective tool for individual and family empowerment; it is also a worthwhile community and social investment. Mandatory full-day kindergarten and increased funding for early childhood programs such as Head Start would be a good beginning.

Collaborative Services

The fragmented state of child and family health, social services, education, job training and assistance programs is a growing concern among educational policy makers, scholars and communities. When strict boundaries exist among schools, human service agencies, the private sector and other important elements of the community, they too often foster a competitive climate (particularly where fund raising is concerned) and produce duplicative, fragmented and disconnected services to a fragmented and bewildered client population. Efforts to remedy this wasteful state of affairs have produced a variety of approaches, from the "Safeway" school of one-stop services, to the learning community with schools as the hub of services to all ages, to partnership programs, and to integrated programs and centers for health, education, social services, recreation and adult education. For many, finding a way to link the school with other community entities in a network of support for families on behalf of children makes good sense. As the Council of Chief State School Officers (1992) puts it:

> The notions of school-linked and community-based support systems are not inherently in conflict. A wide range of agencies, organizations and citizen groups must contribute the expertise and resources to better support children and families. In addition to the school's unparalleled access to students and families, there are other advantages to the school's substantial involvement in such efforts. For example, where school facilities are underused, they can be used to meet other community needs. Moreover, providing certain services at or near the school site — day care for teen parents for example — can help keep young people in school. Making support services available to all students at or near the school site can also lessen any stigma associated with seeking assistance, thereby increasing access to and use of prevention services.

Breaking the usual pattern of isolation between education and social services at the highest level, the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recently joined efforts to address the connections between family needs and children's prospects for school success. The result of their collaboration was a document titled *Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services*, which states:

> A pro-family system will eventually benefit the entire community and the many neighborhoods where children and families live. Creating such a system will require the united efforts of many partners — key leaders from different sectors who come together to find solutions to shared problems...a collaborative is a group of community leaders who have agreed to be partners in addressing shared problems. The collaborative undertakes an initiation — a series of interrelated activities designed [to] solve these shared problems and create a new system of services for children and families. How far these partners move beyond the status quo will depend on whether they choose a cooperative or a collaborative strategy to guide their planning and action. (U.S. Department of Education 1993)

Table I, "A Continuum of School-Community Partnerships" provides a comparative look at three models for school-community linking:

1. **Institutional One-On-One** (direct partnership between one school/one community entity or organization);
2. **Cooperative Agreements** (one or more schools agree with one or more community partners to cooperate in pursuit of individual goals);
3. **Comprehensive Collaboratives** (school/schools community partners collaborate to establish common goals and agree to use their personal and institutional power to achieve them).

Table I

A Continuum of School-Community Partnerships

Institutional One-on-One	**Cooperative Agreements**	**Comprehensive Collaboratives**
(Sponsors → Beneficiaries	(Sponsors ↔ Beneficiaries)	(Sponsors ⇄ Beneficiaries)
Focuses:	**Focuses:**	**Focuses:**
1. Tutoring	1. Needs assessment	1. Needs assessment
2. Mentoring	2. Planning	2. Broad-based multi-agency planning
3. Field trips	3. Research and development	3. Research and development
4. Guest speakers	4. Training in new technology	4. Long-term institutional commitment
5. Summer jobs	5. Teacher/administrator professional development	5. Commonly-defined vision
6. Paid work study	6. Advocacy — policy laws	6. Goals/objectives by consensus
7. Scholarships	7. School-based health clinics	7. Shared authority/decision-making
8. Incentives/recognition awards	8. Magnet schools	8. New roles/relationships
9. Demonstrations	9. Funds to support innovation	9. Advocacy — policy/laws
10. Use of business facilities	10. Advice on restructuring schools	10. Integration of multiple services
11. Loaned executives	11. "Focused" (e.g., on dropout or teen pregnancy prevention)	11. Cross-institutional programs
12. Volunteers		12. "Comprehensive" services, focusing on the whole child
13. Minigrants for teachers		
14. Teaching assistance		
15. Equipment/supplies donations		
16. Public relations		

Source: Terry A. Clark. "Collaboration to Build Competence: The Urban Superintendents' Perspective." *The ERIC Review*, U.S. Department of Education, 2(2) (Fall 1992): 3.

The value of the comprehensive collaborative model is that it seeks to bring about systemic, community change rather than to achieve the more limited goal of coordinating available programs. While any of the approaches noted above can make a difference for children and their families, approaches to systemic change are likely to be more effective and have greater impact. Its key elements include:

- Easy access to a wide array of prevention, treatment and support services;
- Techniques to ensure that appropriate services are received and adjusted to meet the changing needs of children and families;
- A focus on the whole family and its cultural meanings and traditions;
- Agency efforts to empower families within an atmosphere of unconditional respect for families and their cultures; and
- An emphasis on empowerment and improved outcomes for children and families.

As shown in Table I, the comprehensive collaborative model's integration of services addresses the needs of the whole child based on a commonly defined vision and long-term institutional commitment, offering more broad-based service than either one-on-one or cooperative partnerships. The comprehensive collaborative model is based on personal accountability within the community. Change comes when those in need and those who can help relate to each other as human beings with shared values and a common investment in the future of the community. When each child and parent, every care provider, and each member of every supporting institution feels personally accountable for the commonly defined vision and accepts a share in bringing it into being, true collaboration is possible. A comprehensive collaborative that is a school-linked, community-based partnership also brings about *institutional change*, and permanent change in the fabric of community is the inevitable result.

Examples of Comprehensive Collaborative Programs

A number of currently functioning programs are modeled on the comprehensive collaboration framework. Those presented in Table II illustrate that different entities may take lead roles in the initial development and long-term operation. Comprehensive collaboration models' common characteristics include:

- Involvement of a variety of entities to provide health and social services to children and their families, both biological and community;
- Inclusion of the total community in service provisions;
- Provision of services both within and outside the school environment.

Table II

Summary of Model Programs

Program	Brief Description	Source*	Contact
Center for Successful Child Development (Beethoven Project)	The Beethoven Project is a comprehensive, community-based, family support/early childhood development program located in Chicago's Robert Taylor Homes public housing complex. It provides comprehensive services to families with young children living in complex buildings, which comprises the attendance area for Beethoven Elementary School. Participant families receive comprehensive, prevention-oriented health, education, and social services designed to prepare children for school success and to help parents build stronger, more self-sufficient families. The Center combines four basic early intervention models — home-based family support services, center-based family support services, maternal/child health services, and early childhood education — into a single, comprehensive program designed to prepare children for kindergarten entry and later school success.	1,2,3,4	***Lula Ford*** Beethoven Public School 25 W. 47th Street Chicago, IL 60609 312/535-1480
Cities In Schools, Inc.	Cities In Schools, Inc. (CIS) is the nation's largest nonprofit dropout prevention program. During the 1991–92 school year more than 60,000 students and their families received personal, coordinated, and accountable services through the CIS process. CIS insists that it is the *community's responsibility* to bring helping resources to its children, not the children's responsibility to "figure out" where the community has located these resources. CIS reverses the model which demands that students must seek help *outside*, and instead brings help *inside*, through the *repositioning of service providers into the schools*, to serve alongside teachers as a coordinated team in the battle to keep children in school. To these two primary groups, CIS adds support from the business community, as well as student interns and large numbers of volunteer mentors and tutors. CIS has found that when the teacher, a health worker, and a career counselor, for example, work together as a team with the same group of students each day, they are able to achieve positive changes in the students' behavior, academic performance, and attitudes — changes not possible when services are delivered in isolation, uncoordinated, and outside the educational setting.	1,2,3,4	***Peter Bankson*** Cities In Schools, Inc. 401 Wythe St., Ste. 200 Alexandria, VA 22314 703/519-8999 703/519-7213 (fax)
Kentucky Family Resource and Youth Services Centers	The Kentucky Family Resource and Youth Services Centers have been created as part of the Kentucky Education Reform Act. The intent of the centers is to enhance students' abilities to succeed in school by assisting children, youth, and families in meeting some of their basic needs. This is done by providing community services at the centers or by linking families to agencies in their communities. A Family Resource Center serves elementary school children and their families. Services include: assistance with full-time preschool child care for children two and three years of age; assistance with after-school child care for children ages four through twelve; health and education services for new and expectant parents; education to enhance parenting skills and education for preschool parents and their children; support and training for child day care providers; and health services or referral to health services. A Youth Services Center serves middle school, junior high, and/or high school students and their families. Services include: health services or referral to health services; referrals to social services; employment counseling, training, and placement for youth; substance abuse services or referral to substance abuse services; summer and part-time job development for youth; family crisis and mental health services or referral to mental health services; and tutoring.	2	***Terry Conliffe*** Cab. for Hum. Resources Family Resource and Youth Services Center 275 East Main St., 4th fl. Frankfort, KY 40621 502/564-4986 ***Source:** 1 = Federal 2 = State 3 = Local 4 = Private

Table II

Summary of Model Programs

Program	Brief Description	Source*	Contact
New Jersey School-Based Youth Services Program	This program of the NJ State Department of Human Services was inspired by the school-based health clinic demonstrations funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The "one-stop shopping" centers which link education and human service systems by coordinating their services at a single location; helps 13-19 year-olds complete their education, obtain skills and additional training, and lead mentally and physically healthy lives. The initiative requires that local agencies collaboratively plan programs while allowing them flexibility in meeting basic program requirements. Sites are located at or near participating schools, although they are sometimes managed by non-school agencies, including mental health agencies, medical schools and hospitals, and other entities. In addition to core services, many sites offer childcare, family planning, and transportation.	2,4	***Roberta Knowlton*** Dept. of Human Services CN 700 Trenton, NJ 08625 609/292-7816
School Development Program (Comer Process)	The Comer Process was developed by James P. Comer, a child psychiatrist and Associate Dean of Yale Medical School. It is currently used in over 250 schools in 19 states and the District of Columbia. It is a research-based school improvement process involving the skills and energies of the entire school community working together to achieve goals outlined in the school's individual improvement Plan. The process involves 9 components: 1) governance and management team; 2) mental health or support staff team; 3) parents' program; 4) comprehensive school plan; 5) staff development; 6) periodic assessment; 7) appreciation for the roles of "leader" and "management team" in the decision-making process; 8) consensus-based decisions; and 9) "no fault" problem-solving. The governance and management team engenders the sense of community resulting from properly administered programming; it oversees the development of the school's improvement program and acts as a problem-solving group when global issues need addressing. Participation of parents in day-to-day programming efforts as well as in school governance builds their confidence and competence as both contributors to and decision-makers in the school community.	1,4	***James Comer*** Sch. Development Project Child Study Center Yale University New Haven, CT 06510 203/785-2548 203/737-4001 (fax)
Washington Heights Community Schools Project	The Washington Heights Community Schools Project was developed as a joint venture between The Children's Aid Society and the New York City Board of Education. Innovative academic curricula are combined with complete health and social services in a facility that is open 14 hours per day, six days a week, year-round. The "community schools" extend the use of school facilities so that they become multi-service centers providing all services required by neighborhood children and families. The project encompasses three model schools with a total enrollment of approximately 4000 children. Before- and after-school programs, which include academic support, career readiness, and recreation, are provided on a regular basis from Monday to Saturday. Health services include food and nutrition programs, drug and teenage pregnancy prevention, and immunizations, to name a few. The Parent Resource Center encourages parents to become more closely involved in their children's educations by addressing parent or family needs that impede school success. Summer programs provide camp experiences which encompass museum and amusement parks as well as small business workshops. Community Development projects extend the school's impact beyond school-based efforts by providing such services as training programs in small business development.	2,4	***Peter Moses*** Assoc. Executive Director Children's Aid Society 105 E. 22nd Street New York, NY 10010 212/949-4921 212/460-5941 (fax) ***Source:** 1 = Federal 2 = State 3 = Local 4 = Private

The emphasis in these pages is to explore comprehensive collaborative programs as vehicles through which schools and communities can bring a broad range of resources within the reach of families that need them (Chira 1994), rather than focusing on any one need. However, a closer look at how New Jersey's School Based Youth Services Program (SBYSP) addresses adolescent pregnancy adds significant dimension to the telegraphic listing of services provided on this program in Table II's "Brief Description," and suggests the depth of intervention that school-community collaboration can make possible. Typically, New Jersey's twenty-nine SBYSP projects provide pre- and post-natal health care, counseling, job and employment development, academic help, parenting groups and funds to supplement child care. They improve the school context for their pregnancy programs through school-wide group substance abuse programs (including programs for students whose parents abuse substances), anger management and social problem solving programs, conflict mediation, personal growth, and Girl's Clubs and Boy's Clubs. Prevention programs are provided to prevent illness, pain and accident; to develop responsible sexual decision making; and to learn skills for making decisions in tough situations. Two specific adolescent pregnancy programs illustrate the possibilities within New Jersey's SBYSP.

- **Pinelands School** provides a coordinated program of preventive personal counseling and prenatal care that has reduced the number of pregnancies among young high school women and has assured healthy, full birth weight babies for the pregnancies that have occurred. During the program's first year (1988-89), thirteen babies were born to Pinelands students: all were full birth weight and healthy; all mothers continued their education. SBYSP ensured access to prenatal health care, family and personal counseling, preparation for birth, parenting after birth and continued school for mothers. During the second year (1989-90) there were nobirths requiring SBYSP intervention. The reduction in pregnancies is ascribed to personal, therapeutic counseling intervention at the time of students' confusion and concern — that is, *before* the conception of a child.
- **Plainfield High School's** pregnancy prevention program is supported by a consortium of two corporations, four foundations and five social agencies to provide counseling and educational programs that encourage young people to postpone sexual intercourse until a later time in their lives. It also provides an *accredited* course in parenting skills, a life management program that includes employment preparation, and a child care program located in the school. An important element of the program involves the parents of the adolescent mothers in a coordinated effort to provide life styles that include education and appropriate work. The project's records show that SBYSP has reduced repeat pregnancies and increased adolescent mothers' school completion.

Empowerment Through Leadership and Team Development

Several key processes are needed to implement the comprehensive collaboration model and to empower its members to act. Gene Maeroff (1993) states:

> Education might be improved by the formation of a nucleus of committed people prepared to take risks inside and outside their own classrooms.

Teams of committed risk-takers can take advantage of the strength of collective thought and collective skills to empower traditional and nontraditional families. They can promote the integration of educational, health and human services. Such teams would assume ownership of new ideas and strategies and work vigorously for their implementation. An effective community team would include members from the medical, education, social services, housing, nursing, legal, allied health and possibly religious sectors. It could assess issues from health to daily survival needs that impact families. Its members can be trained to generate resources to support system reform, drawing on public funds to develop programs and to sustain reform.

Of the programs presented in Table II, "Cities In Schools" (CIS) provides an interesting example of broad-based community collaboration in a school-linked partnership. Repositioning human service agency staff at the school site is the key to a successful CIS program based on the collaboration of:

- Health agencies for direct services and health education programs;
- Public and private human service agencies for various counseling and other services;
- Parks and recreation departments for recreational and cultural enrichment activities;
- Businesses for mentors, tutors, career awareness, field trips, internships, and employment;
- Universities, for student internships;
- The Private Industry Council for pre-employment job training and part-time employment opportunities.

Changing Institutional Roles and Structures

A comprehensive, collaborative, school-linked, community-based partnership can change the roles and relationships of schools and other institutions in the community. Local schools can change their roles and relationships within their communities as capacity-building training and team-building training provide officials the opportunity to improve the functioning of comprehensive services. The governance roles and functions of school boards and superintendents may be modified via recommendations to the school board. As teachers and other school professionals assume new roles and functions, they may have to enter new contractual arrangements with the school board and its community.

Other institutions will also find a need to redefine their roles and functions relative to the school and to each other as they assess and take responsibility for needs broader than their own, and as they seek ways to make the fullest use of community resources to meet community needs. Some benefits are obvious — as in the financial and human energy economies achieved when shopping malls become community centers, when social services are situated at or clustered near schools, when under-used school facilities are used to meet other community needs, or when community-based health services maximize both accessibility and effectiveness of programs and activities.

Barriers and Impact Points

Efforts to create school-linked, community-based partnerships for family empowerment need to take into account the barriers to comprehensive collaboration. Competition for scarce resources often leads agencies to turf battles, preventing them from viewing other institutions as allies. This poses the biggest barrier to change. When service providers focus only on what they themselves provide, rather than on discovering and responding to the needs of the community, they are unlikely to join forces with others. Collaborative thinking does not come easily, and years of competitive practices can erode the natural tendency toward cooperation. An apparent lack of knowledge and creativity on the part of service individuals may be signs of inflexibility in the structure of their organization or institution.

Other barriers result from regulatory processes and funding. For instance, incompatible funding streams, lack of flexibility in how to use corporate funds, lack of coordination between state/federal levels, and disputes over matching funds may slow the process of getting service to needy communities. Moreover, differences — even slight ones — in eligibility for the services of different agencies and programs can make it very difficult to work collaboratively (Clark 1992).

Success for the comprehensive collaborative comes from focusing on meeting the needs that exist in the community at the present moment. Fortunately, there is no need for each change-minded community to re-invent the techniques that foster collaboration. A number of national organizations have experience in forging community-level partnerships on behalf of youth so that the comprehensive collaborative reflects the community in these processes: identifying its needs, selecting programs and services that best meet these needs, designing new activities and/or adapting existing old ones, and, finally, selecting the most appropriate, least complex structure for delivering services.

Creating school-linked, community based partnerships such as the comprehensive collaboration model can be greatly strengthened by effective federal and state support. Three key impact points provide opportunities for the state and federal governments to empower families through the comprehensive collaboration model.

1. **Policy:** State and federal policies supportive of comprehensive collaboration take the form of legislation, regulations, budget priorities, bully pulpits, executive policies and priorities statements, and action task groups and/or interagency/intra-agency planning and collaboration committees.
2. **Promising Programs and Practices:** The federal government can provide technical and financial assistance to state agencies to develop programs and models/centers, coordinate and deliver comprehensive school health education programs, and school-linked, school-based, comprehensive collaborative efforts at the national, state and local levels. Both state and federal governments can sponsor community-based program development, demonstration and dissemination activities.
3. **Research and Knowledge Base Surveillance:** Both the federal and state governments can systematically collect and disseminate quantitative and qualitative data and materials that describe the state of the art and effective programs and practices.

Agency Collaboration for Family Empowerment

Effective collaboration among health, education and social services is needed at the state and national levels to provide leadership, models and support for school-based and school-linked family empowerment programs in local communities. Both federal and state governments need to act vigorously for the development of public policy, collaborative programs and practices, and the collection and sharing of data and information if all American families — traditional and nontraditional — are to become empowered to assure their children's physical and psychological health as prerequisites for success in school. Since, at least in their broad outlines, state and federal structures for social services and supports parallel each other, the actions urged below refer to both entities/agencies. We believe they are equally understandable as actions urged on the state. Major advocacy and special concern organizations derive their national stature and identity as coalitions of state-level organizations. Needed are:

- A person appointed by the President, Governor, or Mayor charged with focusing health, education, and social services attention and resources on the empowerment of families through school-linked community collaboration programs and providing national leadership in accomplishing the actions presented below.
- An effective coalition of departments (e.g., Education, Health, Human Services, Housing and Urban Development) and entities, public and private, already structured to function at the local, state and national levels (e.g., the National Organization of Women, the American Association of Retired Persons, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) to:
    - Identify needs, opportunities, resources and barriers to community collaboration for family empowerment;
    - Develop plans and strategies for inter- and intra-agency collaboration of state and local health, education and social services.
- Legislative action giving high priority to authorizing and funding school-connected health services to the children of the nation's poorest families: Chapter 1 children, homeless and migrant children, children resident in public housing, children receiving Aid to Dependent Children, children receiving assistance for disabilities, and children in urban or rural areas of high poverty concentration.
- Action to make the eligibility criteria compatible between Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs), Medicaid, Chapter 1, Head Start, etc., so that all students in schools saturated with children of the poor qualify to receive health and dental services through a comprehensive collaboration/integrated services model.
- Action to support school-linked, community-based partnerships for education, health and social services, which include:
    - Legislation authorizing elementary and secondary compensatory education programs such as Chapter 1, Title VII, Chapter 2, Even Start, Migrant Education and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (DFSCA);
    - Mandates to the Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI);
    - Legislation and programs to promote and support school improvement efforts;
    - New legislation that will support comprehensive community collaboration for education, health, and social services. Such legislation could provide states with guidelines and incentives for developing collaborative models and programs, provide financial and technical assistance to communities developing collaborative inter-agency support teams, create authorities and mechanisms for integrating the administration and support of collaborative services at the state and community levels.
- Inclusion in the currently developing National Health Care Reform of support for collaborative community education, health and social services programs as part of an effective national preventive health care policy. Support should include funding of local community collaboration team activities and the redistribution of market incentives to give preventive health measures at least equal priority with treatment measures.
- State and local action to identify and recruit persons as effective agents of change for community collaborative program planning, needs identification, implementation and

administration, drawing upon service models already proven to be both effective and low-cost such as:

  - The Junior ROTC (as a model of government incentives effective in putting key community figures to serve at minimal cost);
  - Membership organizations of senior and retired people (e.g., the American Association of Retired Persons);
  - Retiring military and civil service personnel;
  - The newly authorized National Service Corps of young people who will exchange public service for educational benefits.

- The development of a model Comprehensive School Health Program as a nucleus for school-based, school-linked collaborative community education, health and social services programs.
  - A comprehensive school health program is an organized set of policies, procedures, and activities designed to protect and promote the health and well-being of students and staff. School policies and practices ensure a healthful school environment by protecting staff and student safety, regulating food service, and controlling substance abuse.
  - Health education is an important component of a comprehensive school health program from preschool through grade 12, providing for education, promoting employee health and encouraging substance abuse avoidance. But school health education must go beyond these: schools can be key agents in empowering families for children's health and well-being through the preventive effectiveness of a thorough health education curriculum that includes violence and accident prevention, community health, consumer health, environmental health, family life health, mental and emotional health, nutrition, and personal habits. Health education must include — for boys as well as for girls — gender-rights awareness, responsible sexual and social decision making, and parenthood responsibilities as well as education to prevent unplanned pregnancy, venereal disease and AIDS.
  - A comprehensive school health program will include a component within which school nurses or nurse practitioners provide triage, detect and address health problems, and provide/coordinate/refer for immunizations, ear, eye, and dental screening and treatment, etc. Health services, guidance and counseling services, psychological services and social work are integrated within the comprehensive health program to provide linkages and cross referrals between the school and school-based or school-linked health clinics (private/HMOs/hospitals). School health professionals are also an important resource for schools' education/staff training efforts.

We strongly recommend federal, state and local support for school-linked, community-based family empowerment. The comprehensive collaboration model can be effective in school/community/family integration in the context of existing and new programs and initiatives and greatly increase children's opportunities for school and life success.

PREPARING TEACHERS FOR THE NEW MAINSTREAM: PRE-SERVICE PREPARATION

Recent proposals for educational reform in the United States have given only surface attention to the issue of teacher preparation. The sections of those reports that focus directly on the reform of teacher education have paid scant attention to issues of diversity and equity (Grant and Gillette 1987; Gordon 1988; Bailey and Campbell 1993). Even reform agendas within the field of teacher preparation, such as those sponsored by the Association of Teacher Educators (1991) and The Holmes Group (1990, 1991), do not address the scope or complexity of the issues involved in preparing professionals to effectively teach a diverse student population. In the educational literature, the term "diverse," despite recent attention to issues of race, class, gender, language, and exceptionality, continues to mean "different than the mainstream" rather than varied facets of today's mainstream society. In addition, although acquiring content knowledge is a vital element of teacher preparation, a clear and growing body of research on teaching in school settings populated by diverse students indicates that content knowledge alone is not enough to make teachers effective in ensuring their students' academic success (Wilson 1989; Ladson-Billings 1991). Wilson (1989) argues that "the assumption that subject matter training is sufficient preparation for teaching is erroneous and, indeed, can be harmful." Furthermore, acquiring content knowledge alone does not prepare the predominantly white, middle-class prospective teaching force to accept and affirm human diversity (Sadker and Sadker 1985; Ahlquist 1991; Grant and Koskela 1986).

The State of Teacher Education

It is not meaningful to address educational reform in the United States without considering the relationship among our children, their teachers and those who currently educate both groups. The demographic disparity between those who administer and teach in our schools and the learners they serve can lead to a sociocultural discontinuity that makes difficult the task of transmitting knowledge in a meaningful way (Farkas 1990; Whelage 1992).

Current demographic trends indicate that the ethnic and racial make-up of the student population is continuing to change at a rapid rate. Hodgkinson (1993) has noted that states experiencing the fastest growth — Illinois, Florida, New York, Texas and California — have the highest percentages of "minority" youth. In California, for example, 53% of the high school graduates will be non-white by 1995. In addition, an increasing number of students enter school speaking a language other than English. Some larger urban school districts — for example, Los Angeles and New York City — have documented over 100 different home languages spoken by their student populations. Zeichner (1990) noted that even predominantly white cities, such as Madison, Wisconsin, and Albany, New York, are struggling with inequitable academic achievement. These trends are expected to continue. The most recent statistics indicate that by the year 2035, 50 percent of the under-eighteen population will be children of color (Tamayo-Lott 1993).

Poverty has a devastating impact on our children, and it is evidenced in rural as well as urban areas. More children are coming to school from homeless shelters, hungry and in poor health, than at any time in recent history. Hodgkinson (1993) reported that in 1993, "more than 23% of America's children were living below the poverty line and thus were at risk of failing to fulfill their physical and mental promise." The connection between poverty and racial/ethnic status continues to exacerbate the problem of equitable educational outcomes as it impacts differentially on white and non-white groups. For example, the poverty rate among Native Americans — approximately four times that for white Americans — is an important factor affecting the educational opportunities of Native American children (Atencio et al. 1992). More African American children live in poverty (42.2%) than children from any other group in the United States. In the decade of 1979–89, poverty increased 123% for Asian/Pacific American children and 69+% for Latino children (Children's Defense Fund 1992); among Latinos, Mexican Americans experienced the highest growth–rate of poverty (Quality Education for Minorities Project 1990). Children from single parent families, particularly those with female heads of households, are more likely to live in poverty while young females' lifetime earning prospects remain lower than young males' (U.S. Census Bureau 1993). These factors pose formidable barriers for educators who are unfamiliar with the dynamic and interrelated nature of race, ethnicity, gender, social class and their manifestations in educational settings.

Demographic data on the current and future teaching force do not mirror the changes taking place in the student population. While racial and ethnic teacher concentrations may vary with locality, statistics indicate that approximately 90% of the current teaching population is white (NEA 1986; Galluzzo and Arends 1989; Grant and Secada 1990). Zimpher (1989) reported that these trends will remain relatively stable for the foreseeable future while others suggest that by the year 2000, the number of teachers of color in the nation's teaching force will drop to less than five percent (Weiss 1986).

In 1991, there were 2,314,079 students, grades K–12, identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) in U.S. schools — up almost a million from 1984. Spanish was the primary language of 73% of LEP students; 77% were eligible for free or reduced–price school lunches. A total of 364,485 teachers had LEP students in their classes. Ninety–three percent of the teachers of LEP students were white; 42% spoke a non–English language that was the native language of one or more of their LEP students; 55% had taken college courses or had received inservice training related to teaching LEP students within the past five years. Approximately two–thirds had never taken a college or university course in cultural differences and implications for instruction, language acquisition theory and teaching English to LEP students. Less than 9% had ever taken a college/university course in teaching mathematics to LEP students (Fleischman and Hopstock 1993).

The prospect for greatly increasing diversity in teacher-candidate populations appears minimal unless specific and considerable actions are taken to train and recruit minority teachers. Sleeter (1992) reports several factors that inhibit minority recruitment for teaching careers: increased opportunities for careers with greater financial rewards; culturally biased and gender biased entrance requirements (e.g., standardized tests); the high cost of obtaining a college education; and institutional practices which promote the hiring of white teachers and administrators over teachers of color. A review of the literature reveals little research documenting successful programs to recruit and retain a diverse corps of teacher candidates. Of the innovative programs that do exist, many are experimental or are funded with grant money and lack the stability of traditional teacher training programs. More promising new school-university collaborative projects currently being developed and implemented recruit teacher aides from local school districts. Flexible programs lead to certification through traditional teacher preparation institutions. Preliminary data (Joy and Bruschi 1993) suggest that this may be a successful strategy; yet the fact that these models are experimental, depend on short-term funding, and exist on the fringes of traditional teacher education models suggests that the problem of diversifying the teaching force has yet to receive the committed resources that it needs.

All signs are that the teaching profession will remain predominantly white, female, monolingual, and of rural or suburban backgrounds with little knowledge about or understanding of those who are different from themselves (O'Malley 1981; Irvine 1992; Zimpher and Ashburn 1992). Unfortunately, the statistics related to professors in education — those who will teach our teachers — offer little hope that teacher-candidates will be trained by persons who are themselves knowledgeable about diversity and classroom life in urban or rural schools.

The demographics in higher education differ significantly from those at the elementary and secondary levels in terms of gender. Approximately 94% of the education professorate is white, and only slightly more than 6% of assistant professors are persons of color. These groups contain a much higher percentage of males (approximately 70%) than is typical in K-12 education (Grant, in press). Additionally, Haberman (1987) reported that more than 95% of teacher educators have had no substantive teaching experience in urban schools. It is reasonable to assume, given this data, that the current educational professorate has had little or no training in multicultural education and few interracial or intercultural experiences (Grant, in press). Similarly, training in gender-fair teaching techniques is seldom available or required.

Several studies have attempted to assess prospective teachers' knowledge about and attitudes toward student diversity and multicultural education. Research by Paine (1988) and Weinstein (1989) found that pre-service teaching candidates enter their professional course work with orientations toward diversity that focus on individual differences and emphasize the personality and attitudes of the students while ignoring contextual factors. The prospective teachers surveyed had little or no ethnocultural knowledge about groups with whom they were most likely to work. In addition, student diversity was viewed as a problem rather than a strength or a phenomenon to be explored (Sleeter 1993). The majority of teacher candidates reported a preference for teaching in an area similar to one where they were raised. Few reported any desire to teach in urban areas or in schools populated by large numbers of poor or diverse students (Haberman 1987; Zimpher 1989). The recent research of John Goodlad (1990) confirmed these results, documenting that many prospective teachers agreed with the statement that some children cannot learn.

Gender as a facet of diversity is receiving increased attention. Sadker and Sadker's recent book (1994) discusses a variety of differences in the treatment of girls and boys. Females do not receive the same attention from teachers that males do, are taught with gender-biased textbooks, and are not encouraged to pursue the same courses or careers as their male peers.

Public education's administrative and policy apparatus reveals an ethnographic makeup similar to that of the professorate in schools of education. In 1991, only nine of the fifty chief state school officers were women (AAUW 1992). Based on their research, Bailey and Campbell (1993) report that 95 percent of district superintendents and more than 70 percent of building principals are men. The message that real power is a white male attribute continues to be made in our schools, reinforcing inequity. "The transfer of power in the reform movement," Bailey and Campbell (1993) assert, "will be, in large measure, from men to women."

Many teacher candidates have reported confusion and uncertainty about dealing with race, class and gender in the classroom (Bennett et al. 1988; Wayson 1988; Ahlquist 1991). Their preconceptions about teaching in general reflected an "unrealistic optimism" about the difficulties of teaching, were focused on interpersonal relationships with the students, omitted cognitive concerns, and tended to underplay pedagogical and subject matter knowledge (Weinstein 1989). Haberman (1988) has pointed out that it is exactly these types of orientations that make it "difficult (perhaps impossible)" for many teachers to work effectively in urban schools and in schools populated by children from low-income families.

Teaching in Settings of Diversity

Identifying what is effective in settings of diversity is a necessary first step in considering what a relevant and effective teacher education program would be like for candidates who will teach in diverse classrooms. That subject matter knowledge plays a key role in effective teaching is conventional wisdom. A teacher who has a weak content base tends to have teaching problems, often misrepresenting content and confusing the learners (Gillette 1990, 1993). But subject matter knowledge must be combined with what Shulman (1987) has termed subject-specific pedagogical knowledge or pedagogical content knowledge. Wilson (1989) has offered the following definition of such knowledge:

> Pedagogical content knowledge consists of understandings and beliefs about the range of alternatives for teaching a particular piece of subject matter to particular students in particular schools, as well as knowledge and beliefs about the ways in which students learn the content in question. This knowledge enables teachers to generate instructional representations that are justifiable on the basis of the discipline itself, on theories of teaching and learning, on knowledge of the interests and prior knowledge of the students, and on educational goals and objectives.

Teachers who combine content knowledge and subject-specific pedagogical knowledge with an understanding of the dynamics of diversity, the realities of societal oppression, and the impact of myriad contextual factors on student achievement will increase opportunity for improved educational outcomes for all students (Hixson). There is a growing body of research, much of which is ethnographic, that describes successful teaching for diverse populations. Zeichner (1992) synthesized this literature and identified "Key Elements for Effective Teaching for Ethnic and Language Minority Students," only one of which emphasizes strong subject matter knowledge (Figure 2).

Feminist research supports Zeichner's argument, indicating that collaborative, "connected" learning approaches and attention to gender-related differences in learning styles are key elements in creating learning environments that facilitate learning for both girls and boys (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule 1986). Nel Noddings (1986) focuses on the importance of students and school adults developing an ethic of caring for others and for themselves. Bailey and Campbell (1993) note that:

> Some view the work of feminist researchers and educators as uniquely and exclusively benefitting women and girls. This is not the case. Work that explores diversity, that encourages acceptance and that considers individual differences benefits boys as well as girls. Indeed boys and girls are more similar than they are different. Differences between individual girls and between individual boys are much larger than differences between the "average" girl and the "average" boy whether one is looking at math or verbal skills, or even aggressive behavior.

Figure 2

Key Elements for Effective Teaching of Ethnic and Language Minority Students (Zeichner 1992)

- *Teachers have a clear sense of their own ethnic and cultural identities;*
- *High expectations for the success of all students (and a belief that all students can succeed) are communicated to students;*
- *Teachers are personally committed to achieving equity for all students and believe that they are capable of making a difference in their students' learning;*
- *Teachers have developed a bond with their students and cease seeing their students as "the other;"*
- *Students are provided with an academically challenging curriculum that includes attention to the development of higher level cognitive skills;*
- *Instruction focuses on the creation of meaning about content by student in an interactive and collaborative learning environment;*
- *Learning tasks are seen as meaningful by students;*
- *The curriculum is inclusive of the contributions and perspectives of the different ethnocultural groups that make up the society;*
- *Scaffolding is provided by teachers that links the academically challenging curriculum to the cultural resources that students bring to school;*
- *Teachers explicitly teach students the culture of the school and seek to maintain students' sense of ethnocultural pride and identity;*
- *Parents and community members are encouraged to become involved in students' education and are given a significant voice in making important school decisions related to program (e.g., sources and staffing);*
- *Teachers are involved in political struggles outside of the classroom that are aimed at achieving a more just and humane society.*

New Directions for Teacher Preparation

Zeichner (1992) has also reviewed an extensive body of research to identify factors that have an impact on teachers' ability to connect multicultural training received as part of their own training or professional development with their classroom practice. He has identified fourteen key elements of "Teacher Education for Diversity" that merit serious consideration by Institutions of Higher Education that provide teacher training programs. Zeichner's key elements are relevant to teacher certification requirements as well, if we are to assure teachers who are adequately educated to provide diverse student populations with equitable opportunities to learn (see Figure 3).

Content-driven systemic reform efforts, such as those of the National Council for Teaching Mathematics (NCTM), offer a promising avenue to more effective education for all students. However, they should be considered as one strategy in a system of multiple interventions that are needed if the intended outcomes are to be achieved. Currently, no definitive evidence as to the character, quality or outcomes of implementation efforts in content-driven reform exists. Developing comprehensive curricular reforms without proven results or sufficient knowledge of the complex variables that affect success would be folly. Zeichner emphasizes the importance of a multiple strategy approach. Only four of his fourteen points are directly connected to effective teachers' content knowledge base; five require content plus experiential involvement and five require field experiences.

Clearly, content alone provides an insufficient knowledge base for teachers as they attempt to rectify current gender inequities and to educate racially, ethnically and linguistically diverse groups of children. Chin and Benne (1976) concluded that rational-empirical information (content) is insufficient to elicit change. They argue:

> Changes in patterns of action or practice are, therefore, changes, not alone in the rational informational equipment of men, but at the personal level, in habits and values as well and, at the sociocultural level, changes are alterations in normative structures and in institutionalized role and relationship, as well as in cognitive and perceptual orientations.

In addition, recent reviews of research on multicultural education (Grant and Secada 1990; Grant and Tate, in press) point out that programs that purport to provide a multicultural education for teachers are usually unsuccessful unless they include four critical components:

1. Specific content on multicultural education;
2. Education courses (methods, curriculum, educational psychology) that are infused with multicultural applications (e.g., examples, course readings);
3. Field experiences in schools populated with diverse students;
4. Course work and experiences that require teachers to examine their own life history and education via autobiographical analysis.

Figure 3

Educating Teachers for Diversity: Program Characteristics (Zeichner 1992)

- *Admission procedures that screen teaching candidates on the basis of cultural sensitivity and a commitment to the education of all (elementary and secondary) students, especially poor students of color who frequently do not experience success in school;*
- *Teaching candidates are helped to develop a clearer sense of their own ethnic and cultural identities;*
- *Teaching candidates are helped to examine their attitudes toward other ethnocultural groups;*
- *Teaching candidates are taught about the dynamics of privilege and economic oppression and about school practices that contribute to the reproduction of societal inequalities;*
- *The teacher education curriculum addresses the histories and contributions of various ethnocultural groups;*
- *Teaching candidates are given information about the characteristics and learning styles of various groups and individuals, and are taught about the limitations of this information;*
- *The teacher education curriculum gives much attention to sociocultural research knowledge about the relationships among language, culture, and learning;*
- *Teaching candidates are taught various procedures by which they can gain information about the communities represented in their classrooms;*
- *Teaching candidates are taught how to assess the relationships between the methods they use in the classroom and the preferred learning and interaction styles in their [classroom] students' homes and communities,*
- *Teaching candidates are exposed to examples of the successful teaching of ethnic and language minority children;*
- *Teaching candidates complete community field experiences with adults and/or children of another ethnocultural group with guided reflections;*
- *Teaching candidates complete practicum and/or student teaching experiences in schools serving ethnic and language minority students;*
- *Teaching candidates live and teach in a minority community (immersion);*
- *Instruction is embedded in a group setting that provides both intellectual challenge and social support.*

Conclusions

Existing research findings are useful in conceptualizing a more comprehensive approach to changing teacher education and teaching practices and in framing the key role that federal and state governments can play in leading these efforts. These findings indicate that the following actions should be taken:

- **Provide long-term funding for research and development projects**

  There is an immediate need for research and development projects (R & D) that address the issues of staff support and retainment in urban and rural schools and the recruitment of a diverse teaching force These efforts should combine the expertise of teacher educators and school-based practitioners and should be viewed as ongoing R & D programs where implementation information and results are continually collected and diffused.

- **Support coordination of certification requirements**

  Education is a function of the states with individual districts under the control of locally elected school boards. While conceptually this arrangement benefits local communities, it exacerbates problems of attracting experienced, exemplar teachers to urban and rural areas where their talents are most needed. There is little incentive for teachers to move between states and local districts, and those who do are likely to lose seniority, accumulated benefits and their status on the salary scale. The federal government should support the coordination of certification requirements across states and the states should assist financially needy school districts in their efforts to attract experienced teachers who are committed to achieving educational excellence in urban and rural schools and districts.

- **Facilitate self-discovery programs in teacher education at the preservice and the inservice levels**

  Since the teaching force will continue to remain predominantly white for the foreseeable future, the federal government can recognize and support efforts that assist the present core of current and prospective teachers in understanding their own ethnic heritage as well as the manner in which ethnicity and culture impacts on the lives of others in the United States. The Ethnic Heritage Act (1972) provided many persons of diverse backgrounds, especially members of white ethnic groups, an opportunity to discover their "roots" and to explore the impact of their own ethnicity on their ancestors' experiences in the United States. The projects undertaken under this Act were not expensive and served as an important vehicle for helping white Americans to better understand the importance of discovering and appreciating diversity. The federal government should facilitate similar self-discovery projects for current and prospective teachers. These could take the form of community-based grants and could also be woven into recommendations for teacher certification and accreditation of professional programs.

- **Establish centers devoted to research on cross-cultural attitudes and their impact in educational settings**

  Cross-cultural research on attitudes, especially in K-12 settings, is not readily available. The upcoming competition for federal money for research centers should include a Request for Proposal to investigate cross-cultural attitudes and behavior in diverse K-12 settings. This research should consider multiple types of interactions, including student-student interactions, teacher-student interactions, administration-teacher and administration-student interactions. Such research is essential if we are to better understand the alarmingly high rates of academic failure, assignment to special education, school drop-out, suspension, and expulsion among students of color, especially males.

- **Establish a teaching resource project to identify, design, develop, and disseminate multicultural gender-fair teaching materials, especially non-print resources**

  Review of current research indicates a need for teachers to become aware of and understand the interrelated and dynamic nature of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, proficiency in the English language, and mental ability as well as the role these factors have played and continue to play in facilitating or limiting opportunity and success in the United States. There are published materials on economic oppression, on gender inequities and on the reproduction of societal inequities based on race and ethnicity. The Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs (OBEMLA) offers printed material on the relationship between language, culture and learning. Available information about communities includes how prospective teachers can learn about and interact with local communities where they will teach. Finally, a proliferation of curricula related to the history and contributions of various ethnocultural groups and women, including women of color, has been developed across the country. The development of these materials has been undertaken largely by independent groups (e.g., The National Women's History Project, The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith), and their efforts have not been coordinated. Further, since the vast majority of resources are print materials, a need exists for materials in other forms and media.

- **Establish a major research effort related to integrating knowledge about learning style, gender and culture**

  The manner in which students learn has recently taken on greater significance in classrooms and demonstration schools across the country. Unfortunately, current trends in learning style research, influenced by the work of scholars such as Howard Gardner, have ignored issues of culture and gender as complex facets of learning style. Research results on the impact of learning style and student achievement are limited and the impact of diversity on learning style is underexplored. A major research effort that investigates the relationship among student learning style, issues of diversity, and student achievement is warranted.

- **Identify and reward exemplary field-based programs**

  The states could establish and reward "blue ribbon" teacher education programs that include such key elements as field placements in diverse settings, teacher candidates who work in the community, and collaboration with teachers and administrators in such schools. Monies to fund research on program outcomes, to actively involve teachers and administrators in conceptualizing and implementing the program, and to initiate collaborative staff development in multicultural education would be key rewards.

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PREPARING TEACHERS FOR THE NEW MAINSTREAM: IN-SERVICE PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The watchword of the current reform movement is "systemic reform." A defining attribute of systemic reform is a focus on changing the environment within which schools operate rather than trying to change schools one at a time or to introduce specific programs to help schools in only one aspect. The rhetorical opposite of systemic reform is piecemeal reform. A hallmark of the current push for systemic reform is a focus on accountability standards, assessments, rewards and sanctions based on student performance, curriculum frameworks and regulatory reform to increase flexibility at the school site to use resources to meet students' needs.

Accountability-related reforms are certainly needed, if only to put an end to counterproductive accountability systems based on norm-referenced standardized tests that now inhibit many potential improvements (Slavin and Madden 1991). They can shift teachers toward use of improved curricula. However, they are not enough in themselves to bring about major changes in the nature and quality of classroom instruction. Accountability pressures, frameworks, textbook-adoption regulations, content standards and other aspects of the current rhetoric of systemic reforms may encourage a traditional American classroom teacher to teach more creative writing or sex education or multicultural education, but they are unlikely to help the teacher do a better job of teaching subjects he or she has always taught (such as reading and math).

In order to change day-to-day classroom practices fundamentally, much more than accountability standards and frameworks are needed. What is needed is a coherent strategy for professional development. Identifying effective teaching methods and materials, effective training, support and follow-up are needed as well as the time for teachers to help each other implement new methods. Ongoing professional development that supports and complements systemic reform should be a focus of our schools forever, not just for a brief moment when one-time funding is available or when a burst of energy somehow appears among a school's staff.

Professional development connects federal and state goal setting, accountability, curricular frameworks and the realities of classroom practice. If teachers and administrators confront higher standards without improved resources and tools to meet those standards, the predictable result will be cynicism and subversion. Often, a natural response can be to undermine or belittle the standards, to blame others for their inability to meet them, to find ways around them (for example, by assigning more students to special education) (Allington and McGill-Franzen 1992), or to cheat (Hawley 1992). If higher standards and systemic reform are to lead to concrete and lasting improvement in teachers' classroom practices, top-quality professional development must be a first priority.

Professional Development: The Why and How of Funding

The National Diffusion Network (NDN) has disseminated information on some types of programs and helped put schools in touch with training resources. Chapter 2 funds are often used for staff development, and the Eisenhower program provides staff development in math and science. For the first time, there is growing support for the idea of transforming Chapter 1 from a program primarily providing supplementary ("pull-out" and "add-on") services to individual children of poverty to a means of motivating and supporting schoolwide change. This shift in focus began with the 1988 reauthorization, which expanded the opportunity for high-poverty schools to implement schoolwide projects and changed accountability provisions to focus more on student outcomes. The discussions, proposals and arguments for redesigning Chapter 1, therefore, are enlightening for policy makers at all levels (local, state and federal) who are concerned with changing schools into more effective places of learning for all children. In this effort we see a growing recognition of the need for professional development as a necessary element of equity improvement.

The Commission on Chapter 1, chaired by David Hornbeck, has proposed a gradually increasing set-aside of Chapter 1 funds for professional development, ultimately reaching at least 20%, with a provision to assure that these funds not supplant current staff development efforts and funding. Additional funds were envisioned to build professional development capacity in the states and to pay for enhanced R & D programs for Chapter 1 schools. The Independent Review Panel of the National Assessment of Chapter 1, convened by the U.S. Department of Education and chaired by Phyllis McClure, made a similar set of proposals (U.S. Department of Education 1993a). The potential impact of these proposals could be profound — especially as they model cost-effective restructuring for states, districts and schools with limited economic resources.

Why Should Categorical Funds Be Used To Support Professional Development?

The shift toward "whole school improvement," seen in changes introduced in the 1988 Hawkins-Stafford Amendment and other developments in research and practice, continues as Chapter 1 programs increasingly focus on improving integration of Chapter 1 and regular classroom instruction and on improvements in curriculum and instruction. Schoolwide projects have increased rapidly, and program monitoring has shifted its focus more toward learning outcomes.

Despite these positive trends, Chapter 1 and other "categorical assistance" programs still affect only a small portion of students' school days (U.S. Department of Education 1993b). Student pullout from regular classrooms is still the most common structure, providing "special needs" students with 20–40 minutes each day of remedial instruction in reading, math, language, or English as a Second Language. Except in schoolwide projects, this typically has little effect on instruction in the regular classes of assisted children. The impact of improvement efforts would increase substantially if a portion of special assistance funds were devoted to improving the curriculum, instructional practices, classroom management skills, assessment practices, and other skills of the regular classroom teachers with whom students spend most of their day, and were used for schoolwide improvements in organization, professional development, curriculum, and parent involvement.

The use of categorical funds to hire additional personnel is a common practice. Teacher aides, for example, may free a teacher's time for planning, increased individual attention to underachieving students, or necessary paperwork. However, given the existing need for teachers more adequately trained to teach diverse students, one may question whether using at least a portion of categorical funds for ongoing professional development might not be more effective in improving the regular classroom learning opportunities of poor and diverse students. For example, in an elementary school of 500 students and 20 teachers, the cost of one aide (roughly $20,000 in salary and benefits) could instead fund a professional development program with a budget of $1,000 per teacher/per year. That would be enough to provide consultation, training, follow-up, materials, release time and other development services beyond what most teachers receive. Professional development is especially important as schools make major shifts in curriculum and instruction to respond to new national goals and new state assessments.

How Should Professional Development Funds Be Used?

The funds set aside by states and local education agencies for professional development could be used for a broad range of purposes directly related to improving the education of at-risk students. This could include the following:

- **Consultation** to help school staffs explore alternative courses of action to improve curriculum and instruction. Research on schools implementing various programs has found that school staffs have rarely considered a range of alternatives or consulted with teachers before settling on a given option. Yet a process of examining alternatives in light of the school's needs and resources would be valuable — not only in producing a better match, but also in increasing the school staff's commitment to a course of action they have carefully considered. To facilitate this process, schools might devote funds to hire consultants who are aware of a broad range of options that a school might consider and who are skilled in helping school staffs organize themselves to prepare for reform (e.g., forming committees to investigate various programs, services, and materials for potential adoption), clarify their philosophies, needs, and resources, and develop staff vision and cohesiveness. These consultants should be aware not only of a wide variety of programs and materials from which schools might choose, but also of the research done to evaluate each, and should be able to help school staffs select approaches that promote racial, ethnic and gender equity. After a school staff has decided on a direction and is implementing its plan, the consultant might work with school staff to help them adapt innovations to their needs, a key step in adoption of externally developed models (Crandall 1982; McLaughlin 1990).
- **Training in specific models** of instruction, school organization, parent involvement, family support, and so on. When school staffs have decided how they want to proceed, they would decide to invest in training, follow–up, materials, release time for training and planning, and other costs. These could be costs of adopting specific innovations, such as *Reading Recovery* (Pinnell 1989), general school organization plans, such as the *School Development Program* (Comer 1988) or *Success For All* (Slavin, Madden, Karweit, Dolan, and Wasik 1992), or to help staff develop home-grown approaches to curriculum, instruction, or school organization. Schools might choose to ask the staff of effective schools in their area to help them implement new strategies. Schools might be encouraged (but not required) to use programs that have been successfully evaluat-

ed in rigorous studies. Federal and state agencies might be asked to prepare and continually update guides to effective programs for use in the planning process.

- **Release time** is the key to success of professional development — not only for participating in training, but also for common planning, peer coaching and other means of ensuring staff empowerment for high-quality implementation of new methods. Time for professional development has always been scarce, yet research on effective staff development shows the need for extensive opportunities for teachers to engage in collaborative planning, peer coaching, and other activities. Professional development funds should be available to release teachers in schools implementing major changes to participate in such activities on a routine basis (Purnell and Hill 1992; Showers, Joyce, and Bennett 1987; Wilson 1993).
- **Professional staff** to work directly with teachers to implement new methods. One important lesson of research on the Success For All program (Slavin et al. 1992) is the importance of having a full-time facilitator in each school to help teachers implement the many changes inherent in the program. Facilitators visit teachers' classes to give them feedback on their lessons, organize meetings among teachers for joint planning and problem solving, manage an internal assessment system to make sure that all students are making adequate progress, and ensure that all staff members working with the same children are in communication with each other. For comprehensive schoolwide innovations like Success For All, such facilitators are essential. For less ambitious innovations, district-level "circuit riders," who rotate among several schools using a given method or program, can be effective. This is a typical arrangement, for example, to support broad-scale use of cooperative learning within a district.
- **Materials and supplies** to enable school staff to implement improved curricula and instruction. These could include student materials, teachers' manuals, videos, software and other materials and supplies clearly beyond those (such as textbooks and paper) typically present in schools. However, some sort of limitation must be placed on the proportion of the funds that could be used for this purpose. The danger is that schools might, for example, define "computer assisted instruction" as the innovation they are implementing and then primarily purchase hardware and software. Funds should be devoted primarily to professional development, not expensive materials.

School Control Over Staff Development Resources

Schools should largely control their professional development dollars. Ideally, school staff should be able to choose from among effective programs, adapt and/or develop their own, and select trainers and materials. They should be encouraged to pool funds with other schools, for example, to bring in a trainer or workshop program that would be appropriate for multiple schools. In practice, it is likely that the LEA would take a major role in determining how schools spend their staff development resources, since the district does have ultimate authority over its schools. However, practices should strengthen the role of the individual school in deciding on its own needs.

State departments, LEAs, intermediate units, universities, lighthouse schools and other organizations will all be expected to develop capacity to support innovation in schools, but the schools should have the freedom to make their own selections of consultants, programs, and trainers. By creating a "free market" of professional development services, schools will avoid being saddled with ineffective or inappropriate services; good programs will grow and poor ones will fade, regardless of who sponsors them. This should help build professional development capacity in each state and region, but not compel schools to use any particular service.

Building Capacity to Support Innovation

Serious long-term staff development is so rare in American education that existing capacity for supporting it is inadequate. Therefore, the Chapter 1 Commission has proposed that funds be provided to SEAs to help them build capacity within their states to support innovation. This could mean establishing state or regional Chapter 1 Improvement Centers; working out ways to identify and certify school change experts who would work with schools to help them decide what changes they should be making and make them aware of training or materials to support innovation; identifying highly effective and innovative schools whose staff is willing to work with other schools; or contracting with universities or innovative LEAs to help with school change. However, as noted earlier, the fact that SEAs build capacity to support innovation in no way implies that schools must use their services.

Research and Development in Support of Professional Development

The professional staff development processes discussed above can be helpful in moving schools toward more effective practices and should help to achieve the high standards embodied in the new national goals and emphasized in all of the commission reports. But, by themselves, they beg the critical question: "What works?" What instructional methods, curricular approaches, materials, staff development methods, school organization plans and other alterable features of school and classroom practice make a positive difference in student achievement and other outcomes?

Our current knowledge base relating to effective practice is totally inadequate. Good research on some elements of effective practice is swamped by false claims and slick marketing. Lacking the training to evaluate research findings critically and lacking the time and resources to sift through the research in any case, most educators give up on trying to figure out what really works and instead rely on what's "in." The result is rampant faddism, with educators rushing from one untested miracle to another.

The federal involvement in R & D on effective programs has been minimal. For example, Chapter 1/Title I has spent millions on evaluation but $0.00 to support development, assessment and diffusion of programs and practices designed to enhance student achievement. The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) rarely funds program development. One indication of this is that, although a substantial portion of OERI Research and Development money goes to labs and centers, the National Diffusion Network (NDN) list of effective programs contains only a handful of programs (out of more than 500) developed by labs or centers. The NDN is supposed to certify and then help disseminate effective programs, but its evaluation requirements are minimal and its funding to help disseminate its programs has been tiny (Klein 1992). Ideally, professional development dollars should be restricted to programs that rigorous research has shown to be effective. Unfortunately, today such a restriction would limit schools to choosing from a small set of programs (Slavin, Karweit, and Madden 1989).

Research that focuses on effective practices is badly needed and should be funded. We need actual programs (e.g., reading programs like *Reading Recovery*, and school organization plans like Levin's or Comer's models), as well as information on how to integrate classroom and supportive services, how to organize peer coaching to support the adoption of an innovation, how to incorporate multicultural perspectives in curriculum and instruction, how to use discovery in mathematics or reciprocal teaching in reading, and how to identify other variables that make teaching more or less effective. Since educators usually modify and adapt new methods, research suggesting the kinds of adaptations that might improve or limit innovations would be important.

Second, third-party evaluations of promising programs and practices should be conducted. An important element of an overall research and development plan, this is totally lacking today. Third-party evaluators would negotiate measures, designs, and procedures with developers and researchers, and would then conduct top-quality evaluations, comparing the achievement of students who experienced a given program or practice to similar students in run-of-the-mill models. Developers would know the objectives to be assessed but not the items. Programs and practices chosen to be evaluated would be ones whose developers had already done their own successful evaluations.

The outcome of these third-party evaluations would be a set of programs and practices capable of significantly enhancing student achievement (if properly implemented). Most importantly, adopters could have faith in the evaluations and, therefore, in the programs. This would help them feel better able to invest in high-quality staff development, follow-up and maintenance needed to implement the programs and continue them over time. The third-party evaluations would give education something like the FDA, which is essential in giving physicians and patients confidence in medications and medical procedures. Until we have trustworthy third-party evaluations, fads will continue.

Certifying better mousetraps in no way guarantees their use. Developers and researchers will need funding to take their ideas from the pilot stage to a form that can be disseminated. This means funding for video tapes, awareness and training manuals, building of regional training sites and "lighthouse" model schools for use in a comprehensive training plan. Research and development activities should be funded in such a way that if developers of effective approaches choose not to disseminate them, the funding agency could contract with someone else to do so. Effective programs must get off the shelf and into the classroom, whatever this takes.

Support is needed to build the research and development infrastructure. Predoctoral and postdoctoral fellowships for talented young researchers to get into research and development relating to critical educational needs should be funded. Especially critical is the need to attract women and minority students into this area of research. At present, few talented students choose educational research as a profession, and fewer still choose applied research in schools serving disadvantaged students. This must change if research and development is to become a key focus of quality education.

Finally, schools need to be aware of the range of proven and promising programs. Part of the overall research and development plan should be commissioning of summaries of research on effective practices and reports on important findings. The Department of Education might fund a research journal and a practitioner oriented newsletter to communicate new developments in Chapter 1. Reports may also be written for parents and community members, disseminating information at a readable level so that it does not stay in the research community.

The net effect of the research and development proposed by the Hornbeck Commission would be revolutionary but essential. If Chapter 1 is to demand the use of the best practices with Chapter 1 students, someone must know what best practices are and they must be used for the benefit of all students. This focus can help move educational innovation from faddism to science, and it can help build the infrastructure of educational research and development.

Conclusion

The opportunities for systemic reform in American education have never been as great as they are today. Yet, if systemic reform is to result in classroom change, it must emphasize professional development and research and development (R&D). Changing standards, assessments, curriculum frameworks and regulations create a climate conducive to positive change, but fundamental change in classroom practices must be built teacher by teacher, school by school. A practicing teacher is not likely to change how she or he teaches reading or math because of edicts from Washington or Austin; she and her colleagues will do so only when they are encouraged and expected to choose from among effective programs and are given the resources and time needed to learn new methods and adapt them to their own needs and resources. In the past, the federal role has dominated the direction of educational reform; today, energized leadership must come from the state and local level.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND TESTING

In the current debate about nation-wide educational restructuring, perhaps no issue is more central to the concerns of equity than that of student assessment. We have a long history of using questionably relevant tests to sort children for differential educational opportunities. Awareness of how standardized testing shapes curriculum and teaching highlights the link between assessment and educational quality. Yet, there is no consensus about how educational reform is to be achieved or what the role of student assessment should be. Politically powerful advocates of "outcome-based" education argue that high standards and a national system of testing will accomplish needed educational improvement. This view is reflected in the National Council on Education Standards and Testing's proposed national system of examinations in five core subjects — English, math, science, history and geography — to be administered in grades 4, 8, and 12, and used to determine high-school graduation, college admission and job placement (National Coalition of Advocates for Students [NCAS] 1993). However, advocates of equity in educational excellence (NCAS 1993; Tate 1993) insist that the role of student assessment can be a constructive one only if it is defined within the context of an education restructuring process that includes standards for equity in educational resources and processes that determine students' "real life" opportunities to learn.

We believe that neither excellence nor equity in education can be achieved as long as student assessment instruments, policies and practices limit opportunities to learn and narrow or dilute curricula and instruction. Both excellence and equity goals can, on the other hand, be served by assessments that help teachers to identify students' strengths as well as their needs and to determine the most appropriate and effective means of helping them to learn and grow.

Standardized Testing and At-Risk Students

Standardized tests have a disproportionate impact on students, teachers and curriculum in schools that serve low-income and minority students (Mitchell 1992; Tate 1993). Some widely found effects that are of particular consequence for equity in education are reviewed briefly below.

Testing and Ability Grouping

Both tracking and homogeneous "ability grouping" decisions, especially common in urban schools, are made primarily on the basis of standardized test results. Homogenous grouping has often resulted in defeating school desegregation efforts by substituting within-school segregation of minority groups and is, in addition, itself an unsound pedagogical practice. Even within the same classroom, "high" ability students are taught and expected to learn different content than are "low" ability or "low interest" students (Brown 1993). Tracking and ability grouping are widespread and continue in spite of mounting evidence that is exposing "as fraudulent (or, at least, myopic) the claim that tracking is an appropriate response to differences in children's capacities and motivation" (Wheelock 1992). Even if standardized, norm-referenced tests measured ability validly for all student groups (a claim that is widely contested), their use in sorting students for different educational opportunities is condemned even by the College Board in unequivocal terms:

> A substantial share of U.S. schools engage in ability grouping or tracking of students beginning at the elementary and middle grade levels according to presumed ability levels. As a number of studies have shown, tracking almost always means that those pupils who need the most support to raise their performance levels get the least, while those who need it the least have it showered on them. The consequence is a two-tiered system of education characterized by the following conditions.
>
> - Poor and minority students underrepresented in college preparatory classes such as algebra and geometry and overrepresented in dead-end classes such as consumer math and general math;
> - Guidance counselors who automatically presume that poor and minority students have neither the capability nor the inclination to attend college, and who therefore fail to provide adequate information to those students about college prerequisites and financial aid options;
> - Teachers who fail to provide the necessary encouragement and enrichment to minority and poor students because their expectations of those students' success are low. (Educational Testing Service 1991)

Testing and Retention

Despite its known ineffectiveness, retention in grade is a common administrative response to students' failure to demonstrate mastery of a year's curriculum. Students rarely improve their achievement on the second round — except when they receive special instruction that does not merely repeat the same curriculum. Ascher (1990) writes:

> Since minority students are more likely than whites to test at the lower end of achievement test scores (as well as to be seen as more troublesome by teachers), they have retention rates three to four times higher than those of their white peers. Among blacks, males are particularly at risk for retention.

Reporting on a data analysis performed by Cincinnati Public Schools, Ascher notes that students retained once had a 40–50 percent chance of becoming dropouts, those retained twice had a 60–70 percent chance, and those retained three times almost never graduated (Ascher 1990).

Testing and Curriculum

The pressure on school administrators, teachers and students to improve average school scores on norm-referenced, short answer multiple choice tests has created a widespread tendency to ignore higher-order skills (since the tests elicit facts) and to put classroom emphasis on preparing students to take tests, especially at the elementary level — and more especially in low-income schools where drill has always been a more prevalent form of instruction than investigation has been. The pressures of standardized testing on curriculum have decreased instruction in science, writing, problem-solving and analytical reasoning; they are felt from kindergarten, where the pressure is to teach quantifiable math and reading skills and to prepare children for an educational career of "bubble test" taking, to high school, where minimum competencies for graduation may also mark the upper limits of instruction. *Sixty percent of early childhood educators recently surveyed reported that the pressure of year-end standardized tests caused them to teach in ways that were harmful to their children* (Ascher 1990).

Arizona's recent experience in attempting to use testing to reinforce high-standards curricula dramatically highlights the inadequacy of test-driven teaching. Arizona's researchers created a matrix and charted the items tested by the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the Tests of Achievement Performance (TAP) that were covered by the state's new curricular frameworks, then charted the curricular framework items covered by the ITBS and TAP tests. While the curricular framework covered 100 percent of the ITBS and TAP items, only 26 to 30 percent of the curricular framework was assessed by the ITBS and the TAP. Using those standardized tests, Arizona could learn nothing about their students' mastery of 70 percent of their required school work (Mitchell 1992).

William Tate further suggests that low student assessments may say as much about curricula as they do about students, citing research that reveals that while African American children as a group consistently are outperformed by white children on national assessments of mathematics achievement, they are also less likely to take college preparatory mathematics courses than their white counterparts.

> This relationship between exposure to higher level courses and mathematics achievement should not be shocking. In fact, one of the most powerful predictors of mathematics achievement is course taking.... For example, the National Assessment of Education Progress reveals the substantial increase in mathematical performance that is associated with students completing higher level mathematics courses. (Tate 1993)

Testing and College

Standardized tests play an important role in determining whether or not students completing their secondary education will have an opportunity to attend college, what colleges they will attend, and the nature and extent of financial support they will receive (American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers 1986). Culture and gender bias in college admissions examinations stack the deck in favor of white, middle-class males (Crouse and Trusheim 1988). This continues in spite of the fact that the most widely used college admissions tests are, themselves, poor predictors of students' success in college (Allina 1987; Clark and Grandy 1984). Phyllis Rosser (1992), in collaboration with the National Center for Fair and Open Testing (FairTest), report on the results of bias in college admissions testing:

> The test publishers claim that their exams predict students' future academic performance. Yet, while females consistently earn higher grades in both high school and college, they receive lower grades on all these exams.
>
> Reliance on such biased exams markedly diminishes chances for women to:
>
> - obtain millions of dollars in college tuition aid awarded by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, and over 150 private companies, government agencies and foundations;
> - gain admission to over 1,500 colleges and universities; and
> - enter many special education programs reserved for "gifted and talented" high school students.
>
> All these factors can contribute to a real dollar loss for women in later life as they get less prestigious jobs, earn less money, and have fewer leadership opportunities. Members of minority groups and those from economically-disadvantaged backgrounds are further penalized by the gender, race/ethnic and class biases of these exams. (Emphases added)

Given the obstacles that unfair testing, placement and assessment raise for so many in elementary and secondary schools, it seems particularly unfair that if they overcome the obstacles and graduate from high school they will then face a selection process that denies them equal access to higher education and its lifetime social, cultural, and economic benefits.

Alternatives

> New work in cognition makes clear that both teaching and testing could be structured to better prepare students for the complex thinking required by life. Since current political trends make it unlikely that the power of testing will decline in our society, or that testing will cease to drive instruction, it is especially important to reformulate assessments so that they can help alter schooling in ways that will effectively and appropriately educate individual students to meet their personal needs as well as those of society. (Ascher 1990)

A number of assessment approaches are currently being discussed and implemented as alternatives to the standardized, short-answer multiple choice tests with which we are all so familiar. Whether referred to as "performance assessment," "situational testing," "authentic assessment," or "assessment in context," they identify a range of strategies that promotes instruction geared to complex thinking and problem solving. They provide both teachers and students with maximum feedback to demonstrate not only what they have learned about, but, more importantly, what they have *learned to do.*

> The important distinction is between "assessment" and "test." A test is a single-occasion, unidimensional, timed exercise, usually in multiple-choice or short-answer form. Assessment is an activity that can take many forms, can extend over time, and aims to capture the quality of a student's work or of an educational program. ...(It is) a collection of ways to provide accurate information about what students know and are able to do or about the quality of educational programs. The collective assessments reflect the complexity of what is to be learned and do not distort its nature in the information-gathering process. (Mitchell 1992)

The principal forms of "authentic" or "performance" testing are portfolios, open-ended questions, observations and exhibitions. Portfolios, now used from kindergarten through graduate school, are the best known (Mitchell 1992). They are collections of work actually done by the student, selected to demonstrate progress toward a stated aim. Their use in English/language arts, creative writing and mathematics programs is widespread, and, in several states, portfolio assessments are being developed in science programs.

The new assessments call for tasks that differ dramatically from those usually employed in multiple-choice examinations, especially those that are norm-referenced. In standardized testing, an ill-structured problem is considered unfair. However, using the open-ended questions, situations to be observed and problems/situations for which resolution/understanding is to be exhibited for "performance" assessment, ill-structured problems are intentionally devised. This enables each student to demonstrate mastery in his or her own way: a mastery that is considered more meaningful beyond the instructional setting — since most of the important problems that one faces in life are ill-structured (Ascher 1990). Major differences between norm-referenced, multiple-choice tests and performance-based assessments involve the extent to which performance-based assessments encourage students to:

- Construct their responses rather than select a right answer;
- Solve a problem or work on a task using primary or authentic materials rather than prompts or passages taken out of context or devised specifically for the assessment;
- Apply basic and more complex skills in unison rather than in isolation, and pursue multiple approaches and solutions to a problem or task. (Simmons and Resnick 1993)

Problems with these approaches to assessment include:

- **Difficulty in scoring:** Both Mitchell (1992) and Ascher (1990) report from research and personal experience the difficulty in developing reliable quantitative measures for writing assignments and the need for training if examiners are to score portfolios with a high degree of agreement. Nevertheless, Mitchell and Ascher find that alternative assessments yield better information about student progress.
- **Cost:** Ascher (1990) argues that while such assessments are more expensive per pupil, testing need not be done as often as is done currently. Testing for accountability, in fact, can be done by sampling student populations, which would keep mandated testing costs within tolerable bounds. Mitchell (1992) argues that reducing the amount and frequency of testing will free time for instruction, and that properly designed assessments are, themselves, instructional tools — both of which considerations shift part of assessment costs into the "instructional cost" side of the ledger.
- **Fairness:** The National Coalition of Advocates for Students' concern about the historic use of testing to discriminate against children of the poor and of minorities is reflected in their caution against relying on any test/assessment in the absence of equitable resource and process restructuring:

> Nor are we captivated by claims made for a largely unproven set of "authentic" or "performance-based" tests. As the National Council's (The National Council on Education Standards and Testing, chaired by Colorado's Governor Roy Romer) own panel concluded, we lack evidence that these experimental tests can be widely deployed at a reasonable cost or that they will be fairer than traditional tests for at-risk students — especially when high stakes are attached to them. (NCAS 1993)

Testing and Systemic Reform

Those who support national content standards and performance assessment as necessary foundations for school reform hold that systemic change cannot be accomplished without first defining what we want to achieve (specific content or subject standards) and have in hand accurate performance-based assessments that will measure the extent to which the content/performance standards have been met. By creating universal standards, the belief that all children can reach them is implicit. Such standards, therefore, would by themselves undermine the tracked programs that hold poor and minority students to lower standards. Authentic, performance-based assessment would accomplish curriculum and assessment alignment and would do away with multiple-choice testing that fractures knowledge and leaves students to deal with the bits and pieces outside of context. Multiple-choice tests would no longer drive curriculum and instruction. Students could be taught complex, high-order skills in real learning contexts and testing would allow them to perform tasks that mirror real-life performance in authentic settings.

Simmons and Resnick (1993) point out that the examination component of performance standards will be useless without teachers, content specialists and other educators who have a firm understanding of how to construct and apply the examination system to improve curriculum and instruction and — most importantly — student performance. Today, there is a severe shortage of educators with this needed expertise. Therefore, in addition to building testing and assessment hardware, we must also create a professional development system to transform the way that educators view teaching, learning and assessment.

Equity advocates insist on the unfairness of assessing/testing students to a common standard while exposing them to different learning experiences. William Tate links curricular inadequacy and curricular reform to the realities of funding. Noting the new vision of mathematics education called for by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, Tate (1993) writes:

> This vision will require urban schools to reallocate current funding sources and/or seek additional funding to incorporate a new assessment policy; to improve teachers' mathematics qualifications; possibly to decrease class sizes; to update instructional materials (such as textbooks, science laboratories, and computer capabilities); and to enhance the quality of many other resource inputs. Each of these inputs will require a funding source. This implies that preparing students for a new policy (i.e., national assessment) has important connections to issues of fiscal equity for urban schools.
>
> Fiscal equity for urban schools is one of the United States' most critical dilemmas.... The additional resources required by a policy such as the national mathematics assessment will increase the burden on the already fiscally stressed systems of urban education. Thus, mathematics assessment, local property assessment (i.e., property taxes), and state funding become linked in a struggle to achieve social and educational equity.

We see, therefore, curriculum-based performance assessment as an element of systemic change — but it is only one element. Other questions must be addressed simultaneously if content and performance standards are to improve education for all students. Other critical questions include:

- Will the curriculum that is being assessed be high-quality, multicultural and interdisciplinary?
- Since higher standards and authentic assessments will change both what is taught and how it is taught, how will teachers be taught the new contents?
- Are the funding and mechanisms for teacher training available and in place?

Content standards and performance assessment will prove irrelevant to improved education for an unacceptably large percentage of today's students if:

- Students do not have access to quality programs because of inequitable school funding or because their schools continue current tracking and ability-grouping practices;
- Students enter school unprepared because of poverty or deprivation, health or nutritional deficits, or unstable and violent home or community backgrounds.

Changing the way we assess or test students will only get us what we already have unless we first change the opportunities that we provide poor and minority students to learn. Currently, those students are rarely provided real opportunities to meet the standards that already exist — let alone new, high standards. If reform stops at setting content and performance standards, the same children who have been left out of the reforms of the past will be left out of today's. The National Coalition of Advocates for Students (1993) outlines some real consequences of national outcomes standards unaccompanied by equitable restructuring of our education system:

- Low-income and minority students will face proposed examinations with no proof that their teachers are qualified to teach them the skills they will need;
- All of our children will be required to be "Number One" in science — including those who attend low-income schools that have no science labs;

- Our children will be required to outperform German children who have universal access to early childhood education and health services that massive numbers of our low-income children do without;
- Our children will be held hostage to a single "world class" standard without regard for the reality that they attend schools characterized by "savage inequalities" of resources and environment, and that sort them by group identity for exposure to radically different curricular content, teaching methods and expectations, counseling practices and personal treatment.

At a minimum, students must be taught a curriculum that will prepare them for high standards assessments. Their teachers must have the expertise needed to teach the curriculum, and there must be an equitable distribution of the resources students and teachers each need to succeed. In our tracked schooling programs, which begin with elementary reading, children in poor and minority communities are held to lower standards than the rest of the population (Simmons and Resnick 1993). New standards without concern for equity will simply perpetuate old results.

Criteria for Assessment Recommendations

We recommend that any national, state or local student assessment standard or system meet the following *Criteria for Evaluation of Student Assessment Systems*, which has been endorsed by more than 100 national civil rights, education and advocacy organizations. *Criteria*...was created by FairTest, which, with the Council for Basic Education, co-chairs the National Forum on Assessment.

1. **Educational standards specifying what students should know and be able to do should be clearly defined before assessment procedures and exercises are developed.** For assessment information to be valid and useful, assessment must be based on a consensus definition of what students are expected to learn, and the expected level of performance, at various developmental stages. Such standards, which might also be called intellectual competencies, are not discrete pieces of information or isolated skills, but important abilities, such as the ability to solve various kinds of problems or to apply knowledge appropriately.

   The standards should be determined through open discussion among subject-matter experts, educators, parents, policymakers, and others, including those concerned with the relationship between school learning and life outside school. Without a consensus on standards, there is little likelihood of valid assessment.

2. **The primary purpose of the assessment systems should be to assist both educators and policy makers to improve education and advance student learning.** Students, educators, parents, policymakers and others have different needs for assessments and different uses for assessment information. For example, teachers, students and their parents want information on individual achievements, while policymakers and the public want information for accountability purposes. In all cases, the system should be designed to provide not just numbers or ratings, but useful information on the particular abilities students have or have not developed.

   All purposes and uses of assessment should be beneficial to students. For example, the results should be used to overcome systemic inequalities. If assessments cannot be shown to be beneficial, they should not be used at all.

3. **Assessment standards, tasks, procedures, and uses should be fair to all students.** Because individual assessment results often affect students' present situation and future opportunities, the assessment system, the standards on which it is based, and all its parts must treat students equally. Assessment tasks and procedures must be sensitive to cultural, racial, class and gender differences, and to disabilities, and must be valid for and not penalize any groups. To ensure fairness, students should have multiple opportunities to meet standards and should be able to meet them in different ways. No student's fate should depend upon a single test score.

   Assessment information should also be used fairly. It should be accompanied by information about access to curriculum and about opportunities to meet the standards. Students should not be held responsible for inequities in the system.

4. **The assessment exercises or tasks should be valid and appropriate representations of the standards students are expected to achieve.** A sound assessment system provides information about a full range of knowledge and abilities considered valuable and important for students to learn, and therefore requires a variety of assessment methods. Multiple-choice tests, the type of assessment most commonly used at present, are inadequate to measure many of the most important educational outcomes, and do not allow for diversity in learning styles or cultural differences. More appropriate tools include portfolios, open-ended questions, extended reading and writing experiences which include rough drafts and revisions, individual and group projects, and exhibitions.

5. **Assessment results should be reported in the context of other relevant information.** Information about student performance should be one part of a system of multiple indicators of the quality of education. Multiple indicators permit educators and policymakers to examine the relationship among context factors (such as type of community, socioeconomic status of students, and school climate), resources (such as expenditures per students, plant, staffing, and money for materials and equipment), programs and processes (such as curriculum, instructional methods, class size, and grouping), and outcomes (such as student performance, dropout rates, employment, and further education). Statements about educational quality should not be made without reference to this information.

6. **Teachers should be involved in designing and using the assessment system.** For an assessment system to help improve learning outcomes, teachers must fully understand its purposes and procedures and must be committed to, and use, the standards on which it is based. Therefore teachers should participate in the design, administration, scoring and use of assessment tasks and exercises.

7. **Assessment procedures and results should be understandable.** Assessment information should be in a form that is useful to those who need it — students, teachers, parents, legislators, employers, postsecondary institutions, and the general public. At present, test results are often reported in technical terms that are confusing and misleading, such as grade-level equivalents, stanines, and percentiles. Instead, they should be reported in terms of educational standards.

8. **The assessment system should be subject to continuous review and improvement.** Large-scale, complex systems are rarely perfect, and even well-designed systems must be modified to adapt to changing conditions. Plans for the assessment system should provide for a continuing review process in which all concerned participate.

Conclusion

The nation's history of using tests to sort children for differential educational opportunities is a long one. It is time for schools, local education agencies, and state and federal governments to ensure that no system of testing or student assessment be used except in the context of educational approaches that are based on standards for equity in educational resources and processes. Biased assessment instruments, policies and practices must not be allowed to limit opportunities to learn and narrow or dilute curricula and instruction. Unless preceded by an equitable restructuring of educational resources and processes, testing to meet National Student Outcomes Standards will leave students vulnerable to the discriminatory educational practices that deny 40 percent of students a meaningful opportunity to learn.

More than 100 national civil rights, education and advocacy organizations have endorsed the *Criteria for Evaluation of Student Assessment Systems* presented above. By adopting these criteria as their basis for student assessment standards, states could ensure that student assessments create tools for — rather than barriers to — educational opportunity for *all* students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

State and federal governments have responsibilities both for the quality of the nation's education and for equity in education. Current federal proposals to achieve a national systemic reform depend greatly on states' commitment and ability to restructure their educational systems for excellence. States also share with the federal government responsibilities for implementing both their own and federal equity mandates. While, in recent years, there has been "a rich variety of state educational equity activities...they fall into no consistent pattern from state to state" (Brown and Reid 1987), and have fallen far short of achieving educational equity.

Achieving educational equity across the nation still requires federal leadership. Unfortunately, nearly every federal equity program has suffered from neglect and decreased funding over the past decade, while the Department of Education's (ED's) own structures reflect a fragmented national approach to equity. Its specialized units work in isolation from and competition with each other in a patchwork of uncoordinated programs that — although individual programs accomplish worthy goals — have failed to achieve educational equity.

Federal equity support comes primarily as financial assistance for student groups identified as in need of supplemental services, as anti-discrimination laws, and as technical assistance to change discriminatory practices. Equal opportunity to learn is sought through programs to compensate educational "deficits" of students disadvantaged or put at risk because of some social characteristic, most often poverty. It is also sought through "special populations" programs (e.g., bilingual education programs, special education and rehabilitative services) to benefit groups historically experiencing discrimination. But *equity in regular programs and services*, without which "supplemental" assistance means little, is the object of virtually no federal effort.

Both federal and state efforts for historically discriminated populations need to be maintained, not only to ensure that the special needs of each group are met but also to enable us to learn from the special strengths of each group. But much greater coordination within and across assistance programs is needed to make equity a fundamental issue of all education. No current federal or state program exists to assure the interconnections between educational equity and excellence. What is lacking is a coordinated strategy to lead and support state and local creation of schools that limit *no* child's opportunity to learn to the highest standards. Such a strategy must seek integration of fundamental components of systemic reform that includes the principles and actions presented below.

Principles of Equity in Education

- Each student must be provided powerful curricula through adequate instructional and support systems to give him or her the opportunity to learn and the expectation to learn to the highest content and performance standards established for other students in his or her school, district and state.
- Each family and community within a local education agency's jurisdiction must have access to the information, health and social services, and the participatory opportunities necessary to assure their children's well-being and contribute to their school success.

- Each school must have financial, material and programmatic resources adequate to provide each student an opportunity to learn to the highest standards established for the district, the state or the nation. Measures of resource adequacy must take into account student characteristics, the cost of relevant effective practices and geo-economic factors.
- Teachers and other educational professionals must have the commitment, knowledge and skills to provide all students with an opportunity to learn to the highest established standards. This must include male and female students of diverse racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and those who are gifted, talented or have disabilities.
- Assessment and testing instruments and practices must be fair and unbiased, aligned with curricular content and learning opportunities, and used to inform instruction. They must not be used to foreclose students' opportunity to learn to the highest standards.

The absence of any one fundamental component of systemic reform can defeat any district or school's efforts to provide equitable high-quality education. Action to create and integrate them is needed at the federal, state and local levels.

Federal Actions

1. Include fundamental components of systemic change (school structures and curriculum; Opportunity to Learn Standards; family empowerment; school finance; teacher preparation; and fair student assessments) as inseparable and fundamental objectives for attainment of the National Education Goals.

2. Include among the criteria for federal approval of state Opportunity to Learn Standards the extent to which other components of systemic change are addressed.

3. Establish an inter-Departmental (Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, and Justice) task force to identify areas and methods of collaboration for systemic equity in education.

4. Require the National Education Goals Panel to include progress toward the objectives of school structures and curriculum, opportunity to learn, family empowerment, equity in financing, teacher preparation and fair assessment in its reports on national and state progress toward achieving the National Education Goals.

5. Permit the use of grant resources to support equity integration efforts. Require state and LEA applications for federal education assistance and/or improvement grants to address how they will:

    - Assure comparability of inter- and intra-district financial, curricular and program resource provision between assisted and non-assisted schools and districts;
    - Monitor and enforce district and school compliance with "supplement, not supplant" provisions of assistance programs;
    - Integrate school structures and curriculum development, opportunity to learn standards, family empowerment efforts, teacher and professional staff development and fair assessment with other assisted program and improvement efforts.

6. Support research, development, dissemination and technical assistance to states and LEAs for the creation and integration of effective programs for educational equity. These should

include school structures and curriculum development, Opportunity to Learn Standards, family empowerment, equity in financing, teacher preparation and certification for settings of diversity, in-service development and fair assessment.

State Actions

1. Develop policies and standards that integrate equity concerns in curriculum content, student performance and opportunity to learn.

2. Plan and implement state-wide systemic educational improvement that includes equity objectives for school structures and curriculum, opportunity to learn, family empowerment, school finance, teacher preparation and-development, and student assessment.

3. Develop school finance formulas that provide for "vertical" equity according to district, school and student needs and effective services costs, and that assure both inter- and intra-district equity of educational resources.

4. Develop and implement school assessment standards for assessing student/community characteristics and needs; schools' organization and management; curriculum, instructional strategies and classroom management; staff development and instructional support programs; parent involvement and school/community linking; and alignment of curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development.

5. Develop and implement inter-agency and inter-organization (both public and private) collaboration to remove barriers to learning raised by social, economic and educational inequities.

6. Encourage and support collaborative research and development programs by IHEs, LEAs, and advocacy and nonprofit educational support agencies to improve the effectiveness of teacher preparation for settings of diversity and of in-service teacher and other professional staff development.

7. Develop "whole school" improvement assistance teams to provide technical assistance to LEAs and schools on their request or when they have been identified as failing to provide equitable opportunities to learn. Available state technical assistance should include experts who can act as receivers for a failing school or district until it is successfully restructured.

Local Education Agency Actions

1. Adopt policies that affirm high expectations of all students by requiring equitable school standards for:

- curriculum content;
- student performance;
- opportunity to learn;
- implementation of educational services.

2. Adopt intra-district policies and practices that require equity in financing, staff development, assessment and placement.

3. Adopt policies and practices that support opportunity to learn through family empowerment.

4. Collect, analyze and make public student outcome data in areas of assessment, participation and performance — disaggregated by race, gender, ethnicity and language background — and use that information to monitor institutional change and to guide staff development.

5. Collect, analyze and make public school/community organization data reflecting the progress toward school restructuring in:

- implementation of planned school programs and services;
- family empowerment;
- equity in school finance;
- staff development and its relationship to student outcomes.

6. Require and support "whole school" cyclical improvement processes that include:

- Linking schools to community-based collaborative programs for school support and family empowerment;
- Involvement of parents in school governance and assessment of needs for staff development; as student advocates, mentors and tutors; and as local culture/history resources;
- Ongoing teacher and other professional staff development;
- Equitable allocation of resources among students both for curricular and extra-curricular activities;
- Regular, fair and systematic monitoring of student learning as necessary feedback for curricular and instructional improvement;
- Regular evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's implementation of student programs and services.

Conclusion

Our recommendations for federal, state and local government action flow from a conviction that American education must be equitable if it is to be excellent. Government — federal, state and local — shares and reflects the growing national concern for the quality of American education. Therefore, in pursuit of educational excellence, it must also pursue educational equity. Those who are in government must not forget that educational equity is not only a necessary element of excellence, but is itself inextricably bound up with civil rights, which it is the duty of government to guarantee. Federal, state and local governments must vigorously enforce existing civil rights provisions of their constitutions, laws and programs, monitoring SEA, LEA, and local school compliance and strengthening citizens' access to redress when their rights are infringed (Gilhool 1991).

We believe that federal, state and local governments all must use their civil rights authority, their legislative power, their power of the purse and their "bully pulpits" to guide, support and assist school communities to accomplish systemic change that recognizes equity as one defining characteristic of educational excellence — and that ensures equality of opportunity and protection to all. Committed government action to integrate and implement the recommendations made above will provide bases on which schools can create excellent learning opportunities for *all* the children of our diverse society. In doing so, it will move the nation closer to fulfilling the American promise of civil equality for all.

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NATIONAL COALITION OF EDUCATIONAL EQUITY ADVOCATES

Steering Committee*

Amanda Broun
Director of National Public Policy
Public Education Fund Network
601 13th Street, NW, Suite 290N
Washington, DC 20005

Kathy Scales Bryan
Research Associate, Program & Policy Department
American Association of University Women
1111 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036-4873

Patricia Campbell
Director
Campbell-Kibler Associates
Groton Ridge Heights
Groton, MA 01450

Beverly Cole
Director, Education Department
NAACP National Headquarters
4805 Mt. Hope Drive
Baltimore, MD 21215

Sandra Del Valle
Associate Counsel
Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc.
99 Hudson Street, 14th Street
New York, NY 10013

Sheryl Denbo
President
Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, Inc.
5454 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1500
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

James Early
Assistant Secretary for Education and Public Services
Smithsonian Institution
1000 Jefferson Drive, S.W., Room 105
Washington, DC 20560

Warlene Gary
Manager of Education, Business and Outreach Programs
National Education Association
1201 16th Street, NW, 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20036

Donna Gollnick
Vice President
National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
2010 Mass. Ave., NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036

Carl Grant
Professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Teacher Education
University of Wisconsin-Madison
225 North Mills Street
Madison, WI 53706

Samuel Halperin
Director
The American Youth Policy Forum
1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 719
Washington, DC 20036

Karen Hanson
Education Policy Associate
National Council of La Raza
810 1st St., NE, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002

Helené Hodges
Director, Collaborative Ventures
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
1250 N. Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-1403

Florence Hongo
President, Board of Directors
Asian American Curriculum Project, Inc.
234 Main Street
San Mateo, CA 94401

Organizational affiliation is used for identification purposes only and does not indicate support of the organization or its governing board

Shirley Jackson
Director of Comprehensive School Health
Education Program
U.S. Department of Education
Capitol Place Bld., Rm 522
555 New Jersey Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20208-5524

Vinetta Jones
National Director, The College Board
45 Columbus Avenue
New York, NY 10023-6992

Jonathan Kozol
Author
P.O. Box 145
Byfield, MA 01922

Van Le
Consultant, Office of Bilingual Education
California Department of Education
6531 Park Rivera Way
Sacramento, CA 95831

Horacio Lewis
Education Associate, Multicultural
Education/Desegregation Programs
Delaware Department of Public Instruction
P.O. Box 1402, Townsend Building
Dover, DE 19903

Ronald Lewis
Vice President, CIS Academies
Cities in Schools, Inc.
401 Wythe Street, Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22314-1963

James J. Lyons, Esq.
Executive Director
National Association for Bilingual Education
1220 L Street, NW, Suite 605
Washington, DC 20005

Rodolfo Martinez
Director of Bilingual Education
Teacher Education Division
Wayne State University
Detroit, MI 48202

Estela C. Matriano
Professor of Education
Coordinator of Multicultural and International
Education
608 Teachers College Building
University of Cincinnati
Cincinnati, OH 45221-0002

Shirley McBay
President
Quality Education for Minorities Network
1818 N. Street, NW, Suite 350
Washington, DC 20036

Shirley McCune
President
Learning Trends
325 2nd Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003

Sonia Nieto
Associate Professor
Cultural Diversity and Curriculum Reform
Program
School of Education
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003

Albert Ochoa
Professor of Policy Studies Department
Teacher Education
San Diego State University
San Diego, CA 92120

Valerie Ooka Pang
Associate Professor
Teacher Education
San Diego State University
San Diego, CA 92120

Elizabeth Weiser Ramirez
Director of Advocacy
ASPIRA Association, Inc.
1112 16th Street, NW, Suite 340
Washington, DC 20036

Francisco A. Rios
Assistant Professor
College of Education
California State University
San Marcos, CA 92096-0001

E. Joseph Schneider
Deputy Executive Director
Southwest Regional Laboratory
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

Gwen Shunatona
President
ORBIS Associates
1411 K Street, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005

Warren Simmons
Senior Associate
Annie E. Casey Foundation
1 Lafayette
Greenwich, CT 06830

Juanita Tamayo-Lott
President
Tamayo-Lott Associates
717 Springloch Road
Silver Spring, MD 20904

William Tate
Assistant Professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Teacher Education Building
University of Wisconsin-Madison
225 N. Mills Street
Madison, WI 53706

Huynh Dinh Te
Senior Equity Associate
Southwest Regional Laboratory
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

Jose Manuel Torres
Coordinator of Special Population
Baltimore City Public Schools
200 E. North Ave.,
Baltimore, MD 21202

Jennifer Tucker
Deputy Director
Center for Women Policy Studies
2000 P Street, NW, Suite 508
Washington, DC 20036

THE NATIONAL COALITION OF EDUCATIONAL EQUITY ADVOCATES

Educate America: A Call For Equity in School Reform

Writing and Editing Committees

World Class Standards Committee

Shirley McCune (Chair)
President
Learning Trends
325 2nd Street, S.E.
Washington, DC 20003

Charo Basterra
Director of National Origin
Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, Inc.
5454 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1500
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Kathy Scales Bryan
Research Associate
American Association of University Women
Program & Policy Department
1111 16th St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20032-4873

Patricia Campbell
Campbell Associates
80 Lakeside Drive
Groton Ridge Heights
Groton, MA 01450

Steven Carbo
Mexican American Legal
Defense and Educational Fund
733 15th Street, N.W., Suite 920
Washington, DC 20005

Sheryl Denbo
President
Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, Inc.
5454 Wisconsin Ave., Suite 1500
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Harriet Doss-Willis
Director
Southwest Regional Laboratory for
Educational and Regional Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

James Early
Assistant Secretary for Education
and Public Service
Smithsonian Institution
1000 Jefferson Drive, S.W., Room 105
Washington, DC 20560

Richard Gray
Co-Director
National Coalition of Advocates for Students
100 Boylston Street
Suite 737
Boston, MA 02116-4610

Karen Narasaki
Washington D.C. Representative
Japanese American Citizens League
1001 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 704
Washington, DC 20036

Gary Orfield
Administration Planning & Social Policy Area
Graduate School of Education
Harvard University
442 Gutman Library
Cambridge, MA 02138

Elizabeth Weiser Ramírez
Director of Advocacy
ASPIRA Association, Inc.
1112 16th Street, N.W., Suite 340
Washington, DC 20036

Ruth Osterweis Selig
Executive Assistant to the Assistant
Secretary for the Sciences
S.I. Building Room 120
Smithsonian Institution
1000 Jefferson Drive
Washington, DC 20560

Linda Shevitz
Equal Opportunity Office
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

School Finance

Sheryl Denbo (Chair)
President
Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, Inc.
5454 Wisconsin Ave., Suite 1500
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Sandy Del Valle
Associate Counsel
Puerto Rican Legal Defense and
Education Fund, Inc.
99 Hudson Street, 14th Floor
New York, NY 10013

Margaret Goertz
Senior Research Fellow
The Consortium for Policy
Research in Education
Eagleton Institute of Politics
Rutgers University
90 Clifton Avenue
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Jonathan Kozol
Author
P.O. Box 145
Byfield, MA 01922

Mary Levy
Project Director, Education Project
Washington Lawyers Committee &
Clients Groups
1400 I Street, N.W., Suite 450
Washington, DC 20005

James McPartland
Co-Director
Center for Social Organization of Schools
Johns Hopkins University
3505 North Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21218

Dianne Piche
Attorney
Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights
2000 M Street, N.W., Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036

William Taylor
Vice President
Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights
2000 M Street, N.W., Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036

Joyce A.M. Thomas
Special Assistant to the Superintendent
National Committee on School
Desegregation and
Prince George's County Public Schools
14201 School Lane
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Byron Williams
Consultant
339 East 16th Street
Holland, MI 49423

Family Empowerment

Shirley Jackson (Chair)
Director of Comprehensive School
Health Education Program
U.S. Department of Education
Capitol Place Building, Room 522
555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20208-5524

Peter Bankson
Special Assistant to the President
Cities in Schools, Inc.
401 Wythe Street, Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22314-1963

Amanda Broun
Director of National Public Policy
Public Education Fund Network
601 13th Street, N.W., Suite 290N
Washington, DC 20005

Warlene Gary
Manager
Education, Business and Outreach Programs
National Education Association
1201 16th Street, N.W., 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20036

Cynthia Jasso-Rotunno
Talent Search Program Coordinator
LULAC National Educational Service
Centers, Inc.
777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 305
Washington, DC 20002

Ronald H. Lewis
Vice President, CIS Academies
Cities in Schools, Inc.
401 Wythe Street, Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22314-1963

Shirley McCune
President
Learning Trends
325 2nd Street, S.E.
Washington, DC 20003

Evelyn Moore
Executive Director
National Black Child Development Institute
1023 15th Street, N.W., Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005

Linda Moore
Senior Associate for Leadership Program
Institute for Educational Leadership
1001 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Suite 310
Washington, DC 20036

Ruth Pagani
Public Policy Coordinator
National Puerto Rican Coalition, Inc.
1700 K Street, N.W., Suite 500
Washington, DC 20006

Hawthorne Smith
Senior Research Assistant
Institute for Urban and Minority Education
Teacher's College, Columbia University, Box 75
New York, NY 10027

Teacher Education and Teacher Certification

Carl Grant (Co-chair)
Professor
Teacher Education Building
University of Wisconsin-Madison
225 North Mills Street
Madison, WI 53706

Maureen Gillette (Co-chair)
Assistant Professor
School of Education
The College of St. Rose
Albany, NY 12203

Merle Froshl
Co-Director
Educational Equity Concepts, Inc.
114 East 32nd Street
New York, NY 10016

Erica Gilbertson
Program Coordinator
Network of Educators on the Americas
1118 22nd Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20037

Donna Gollnick
Vice President
National Council for Accreditation of
Teacher Education
2010 Mass. Ave., N.W., Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036

James Greenberg
Coordinator of Teacher
Education Development
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20740

Willis Hawley
Dean of College of Education
3119 Benjamin Building
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742

Sheila Simmons
Senior Professional Associate
Human and Civil Rights Division
National Education Association
1201 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036

Staff Development Programs

Robert Slavin (Chair)
Director, Elementary School Programs
Center for Research on Effective
School for Disadvantaged Students
Johns Hopkins University
3505 North Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21218

Doug Carnine
College of Education
University of Oregon
P.O. Box 10459
Eugene, OR 97440

Beverly Cole
Director, Education Department
NAACP National Headquarters
4805 Mt. Hope Drive
Baltimore, MD 21215

Gene Garcia
Dean of School of Social Science
Kerr Hall
University of California in Santa Cruz
1156 High Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95064

Kati Haycock
American Association for Higher Education
One Dupont Circle, Suite 360
Washington, DC 20036-1110

Vinetta Jones
Director, EQUITY 2000
The College Board
45 Columbus Ave.
New York, NY 10230-6992

Ed Joyner
School Development Project
Yale University
New Haven, CT 06510-8009

Diana Lam
Superintendent
Dubuque Public Schools
2300 Chaney Road
Dubuque, Iowa 52001

Larry Lezotte
Senior Vice President
Effective Schools
2199 Jolly Road, Suite 160
Okemos, MI 48864

Joe Schneider
Southwest Regional Laboratory
4665 Lampson Ave.
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

Byron Williams
Consultant
339 East 16th Street
Holland, MI 49423

Ken Wilson
Project Discovery
Department of Physics
Ohio State University
174 W. 18th Ave.
Columbus, OH 43210

Student Assessment

Patricia Free Brett (Chair)
Director of Community Outreach
Quality Education for Minorities Network
1818 N Street, N.W., Suite 350
Washington, DC 20036

Sheryl Denbo
President
Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, Inc.
5454 Wisconsin Ave., Suite 1500
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Shirley McBay
President
Quality Education for Minorities Network
1818 N Street, N.W., Suite 350
Washington, DC 20036

Karen Narasaki
Washington D.C. Representative
Japanese American Citizens League
1001 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 704
Washington, DC 20036

Monty Neill
Associate Director
National Center for Fair & Open Testing
342 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02139

Warren Simmons
Senior Associate
Annie E. Casey Foundation
1 Lafayette
Greenwich, CT 06830

Floraline Stevens
Science Education Evaluation Analyst
National Science Foundation
1800 G Street, N.W., Room 1249
Washington, DC 20550

Ellen Vargyas
National Women Law Center
1616 P Street, NW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20036

Byron Williams
Consultant
339 East 16th Street
Holland, MI 49423

Veda Wright
Field Organizer
National Center for Fair & Open Testing
342 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02139

ENDORSEMENTS OF *EDUCATE AMERICA:* *A CALL FOR EQUITY IN SCHOOL REFORM*

Organizations

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Florence Hongo
General Manager

ASPIRA Association, Inc.
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Director of Advocacy

Black Psychiatrists of America
Isaac Slaughter, M.D.
President

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Director

Business & Professional Women/USA
Kate Premo
Manager of Public Policy

Campbell-Kibler Associates
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Center for Social Organization of Schools, Johns Hopkins University
James McPartland
Co-Director

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Executive Director

Child Welfare League of America, Inc.
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Deputy Director

Council for Basic Education
Ruth Mitchell
Education Policy Analyst

Council of the Great City Schools
Michael Casserly
Executive Director

Delaware State Department of Public Instruction
Dr. Pascal D. Forgione, Jr.
State Superintendent

Education Trust-The American Association for Higher Education
Paul F. Ruiz
Principal Partner

Educational Equity Concepts, Inc.
Merle Froschl
Barbara Sprung
Co-Directors

Effective Schools Products, Ltd.
Lawrence Lezotte
Senior Vice President

Human & Civil Rights, National Urban Coalition
Ramona H. Edelin
President

Institute for Educational Leadership
Linda R Moore
Senior Associate

Institute for Urban & Minority Education, Teachers College, Columbia University
Hawthorne Smith
Senior Research Assistant

Intercultural Development Research Association
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Executive Director

Jack and Jill of America, Inc.
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Learning Trends
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The Links, Inc.
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Executive Director

The Mid-Atlantic Center
Sheryl Denbo
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Charles I. Rankin
Director

National Action Council for
Minorities in Engineering
Lea E. Williams
Executive Vice President

National Alliance of Vietnamese
American Service Agencies (NAVASA)
Nguyen Minh Chau
Washington Representative

National Association for the
Advancement of Colored People
Beverly P. Cole
Director, Education Department

National Association for Bilingual Education
James J. Lyon
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Education & Advancement of
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Americans (NAFEA)
Cindy Le
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The National Citizens Commission for
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National Black Police Association
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Director

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Director

National Urban League, Inc.
Michael Webb
Director of Education

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Executive Director

Network of Educators on the Americas
Deborah Menkart
Director

New England Desegregation Assistance Center
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Director

Northwest Regional Laboratory,
Center for National Origin,
Race and Sex Equity
Ethel Simon-McWilliams
Director

The Phelps-Stokes Fund
Wilbert J. LeMelle
President

Public Education Fund Network
Amanda Broun
Director of Policy and Program

Puerto Rican Legal Defense & Education Fund
Sandra Del Valle
Associate Counsel

San Diego Sate University,
College of Education
Ann I. Morey
Dean

Smithsonian Institution
James Early
Assistant Secretary for
Education & Public Service

Social Equity Technical Assistance Center
Alberto M. Ochoa
Co-Director

Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
Le Xuan Khoa
President

Southwest Regional Laboratory
E. Joseph Schneider
Deputy Executive Director

University of Michigan, Programs for
Educational Opportunity
Percy Bates
Director

University of Northern Colorado
Herman D. Lujan
President

Washington Lawyers' Committee for
Civil Rights & Urban Affairs
Mary M. Levy
Director, Public Education Project

Individuals*

Nguyen Minh Chau
Executive Vice President and Chief
Operating Officer
Opportunity Systems, Inc.

Carlos E. Cortés
Professor of History
University of California-Riverside

Helené Hodges
Director, Collaborative Ventures
Association for Supervision and
Curriculum Development

Jonathan Kozol
Author

Estela C. Matriano
Professor, Coordinator
of Multicultural/International Education
University of Cincinnati, College of Education

Deborah Wei
Co-President
Asian Americans United

David M. Whitehorse
Assistant Professor, College of Education
California State University-San Marcos

**Organizational listing for identification purposes only.*

TITLE IV DESEGREGATION ASSISTANCE CENTERS

Region I

John Correiro
Director
New England Desegregation
Assistance Center
Brown University
144 Wayland Avenue
Providence, RI 02926
Office: (401) 351-7577
Fax: (401) 421-7650

Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts,
New Hamsphire, Rhode Island,
Vermont

Region II

LaMar Miller
Executive Director
The Metro Center
32 Washington Place, Room 72
New York, NY 10003
Office: (212) 998-5100
Fax: (212) 995-4199

New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico,
Virgin Islands

Region III

Sheryl Denbo
Director
Mid-Atlantic Center
5454 Wisconsin Ave., Suite 1500
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
Office: (301) 657-7741
Fax: (301) 657-8782

Delaware, District of Columbia,
Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia,
West Virginia

Region IV

Gordon Foster
Director
Southeastern Desegregation
Assistance Center
Miami Equity Associates, Inc.
8603 S. Dixie Highway, Suite 304
Miami, FL 33143
Office: (305) 669-0114
Fax: (305) 669-9809

Alabama, Florida, Georgia,
Kentucky, Mississippi,
South Carolina, Tennessee,
North Carolina

Region V

Percy Bates
Director
Regents of the University of Michigan
4725 E. Jefferson St., Rm 1322, U-M
Ann Arbor, MI 48109
Office: (313) 763-9901
Fax: (313) 763-1229

Illinois, Indiana, Michigan,
Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin

Region VI

Alicia Salinas Sosa
Director
Intercultural Development Research Assoc.
5835 Callahan, Suite 350
San Antonio, TX 78210
Office: (210) 684-8180
Fax: (210) 684-5389

Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas

Region VII

Charles Rankin
Director
Midwest Desegregation Assistance Center
Kansas State University
Bluemont Hall
Manhattan, KS 66505
Office: (913) 532-6408
Fax: (913) 532-7304

Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska

Region VIII

Gerald Brown
Director
Metropolitan State College/Denver
1100 Stout Street, Suite 800
Denver, CO 80204
Office: (303) 556-2999
Fax: (303) 556-8505

Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

Region IX

Harriet Doss-Willis
Director
Southwest Regional Laboratory
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
Office: (310) 598-7661
Fax: (310) 985-9635

Arizona, California, Nevada

Region X

Ethel Simon-McWilliams
Associate Executive Director
Northwest Regional Education Laboratory
101 SW Main Street, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97204
Office: (503) 275-9507
Fax: (503) 275-9489

Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Trust Territory of the Pacific

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